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ABSTRACT

This study addressed the link between policies and practices related to teaching staff and sustaining and improving standards in higher education in the United Kingdom. Evidence from the literature has indicated that teaching is increasingly being given less priority in comparison with research in higher education. It is clear from the data of this study, collected from stakeholder interviews at 15 organizations, 6 case studies in higher education institutions, and an e-mail survey completed by 35 Heads of Human Resources in higher education institutions, there is no panacea to cope with the diversity of staffing required in higher education. Some institutions are more seriously affected than others by factors outside the higher education sector, such as location and competition in terms of pay and alternative conditions. The higher education sector frequently has few appraisal, mentoring, or career guidance schemes that are helpful to teaching staff. A number of tensions were identified in relation to teaching staff in higher education. The main report summarizes the evidence and emerging issues concerning recruitment, retention, and promotion of teaching staff in higher education. Five appendixes contain more detail about the research questions, the context of the study, views of stakeholders, a survey of human resource managers in higher education institutions, and case studies of policies and practices related to teaching staff in six higher education institutions. (SLD)

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ED 476 446

Appointment, retention and promotion of academic staff in higher education institutions

A report to the HEFCE by the Scottish Council for Research in Education, University of Glasgow and Nottingham Trent University

January 2003

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Executive summary

This report concerns factors that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion in the higher education sector in England. These factors include processes, quality, possible pathways and areas of good practice related to all academic staff with teaching responsibilities. The project addresses the link between policies and practices related to teaching staff and sustaining and improving standards in higher education.

The project, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is the co-operative effort of three groups: the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE), the University of Glasgow and Nottingham Trent University.

Evidence from the literature indicates that increasingly teaching is being given less priority in comparison with research. Staff recruitment, retention and promotion have also been influenced by policy initiatives.

It is clear from data collected from stakeholder interviews, case studies in higher education institutions (HEIs), and an email survey of Heads of Human Resources in HEIs, that there is no panacea to cope with the diversity of staffing required in higher education. Some institutions, departments and subjects are more seriously affected than others by factors outside the higher education sector. Influences include location and competition in terms of pay and alternative conditions. The perceived impact of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is considerable in decisions made about an individual's selection and promotion, and some staff believe it has diminished recognition of the importance of teaching and students' learning.

The higher education sector emphasises individualism and pays less attention to issues to do with staff development and equality of opportunity. Although some institutions have put a lot of effort into their policies and practices, the sector has few appraisal, mentoring or career guidance schemes that are helpful. There is often a lack of transparency in appointment and promotion criteria and processes, and those working part-time and/or on short-term fixed contracts can be excluded from staff development and promotion opportunities.

The tensions identified in relation to teaching staff in higher education include how to:

- encourage staff to develop their careers as teachers rather than becoming research stars or moving into administration in order to gain promotion
- accommodate all-rounders as well as specialists at all levels in an institution
- deal with funding policies that reward research and undermine teaching in higher education
- cope fairly with differential rewards associated with academic research and more practitioner or professional focused links with those outside higher education
- balance individualism and collegial values in higher education
- reconcile the need for flexible staffing strategies with equality of opportunity
- provide better support and training for managers and leaders in higher education
- enhance retention and benefit from staff mobility.

The main report summarises the evidence and emerging issues concerning recruitment, retention and promotion of teaching staff in higher education. In the appendices, more detail is available on the research questions, the context of the study, views of stakeholders and the survey of human resource managers in HEIs. Case studies of policies and practices in six HEIs illustrate diversity in management practices and individuals' experiences.

1: Introduction and context

1.1 Introduction

This project funded by the HEFCE is the co-operative effort of three groups: the Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE), the University of Glasgow and Nottingham Trent University.

The study explores factors affecting academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion in the higher education sector in England, paying particular attention to processes, quality, possible pathways and areas of good practice related to teaching staff. The project also addresses the link between policies and practices related to academic staff and sustaining and improving standards in higher education. The study refers to all academic staff (including those on hourly-paid contracts), research and management staff, and administrators with closely associated academic responsibilities.

1.2 The context

There are four contextual issues which will impact on the project:

- how higher education is funded
- the current costing environment
- changing employment legislation
- the behaviour of the labour market.

All the evidence from the literature points to increasing problems in the areas of recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff. The neglect of the role of teaching, despite its core importance in the quality of higher education, has created distortions which will be difficult to remedy. It may be inadequate to assume that by supporting strong researchers, and to a lesser extent those who wish to take management roles, that teaching quality will also be enhanced.

Policy initiatives have had a mixed effect. Those policies designed to support teaching have been overshadowed and undermined by policies which have the opposite effect. Other trends in HE, such as the comparative erosion of salaries and conditions, the rise of insecure employment, and the lack of penetration of equality of opportunity have made the occupation rather less attractive. In some areas where there are few alternative career opportunities this has had less direct impact, but can hardly encourage the motivation and productivity of staff. A key feature of HE is diversity and there is some danger that offering general prescriptions may benefit some areas but create further problems in others. Given this context, this study aimed to uncover and scrutinise what is happening on the ground at a level that reflects this diversity. Appendix 2 contains the detailed literature review.

1.3 Research questions

The researchers set out to answer seven main research questions.

Each of these questions was expanded with a series of more detailed queries and these are listed in Appendix 1.

- What are the issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion?
- How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?
- What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?
- What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?
- What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?
- How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?
- What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?

1.4 Design, methods and analysis

1.4.1 Overview

There were three phases in this six month project (May-October 2001):

- a preliminary phase to clarify the brief and the main issues, to collate and review relevant studies and evidence and to prepare the research instruments
- a data collection phase to collect, concurrently, evidence from all the major stakeholders, undertake an analysis of HESA staff data and to build up case studies of HEI staffing practices
- analysis, validation and reporting.

Details of the methodology and research instruments are in Appendix 1.

1.5 Elements of the research

1.5.1 Literature review

The review of existing evidence relevant to the research questions is attached as Appendix 2.

1.5.2 Stakeholder perspectives

Perspectives from other principal stakeholders were collected through a series of semi-structured interviews with representatives from a range of organisations. The

summary analysis of these interviews and list of stakeholders are in Appendix 3. The interview schedule is in Appendix 1.

1.5.3 Information on current policies

Information on current policies and practices was gathered from an email survey of Human Resource (HR) Managers/Directors of Personnel in all HEIs in England. The email survey structured questionnaire is in Appendix 1. Of the 132 institutions surveyed, 35 (27%) responded: the lower than expected response rate may be because the survey had to be conducted over the summer vacation. However, the profile of respondents adequately reflects the overall profile of higher education in England. It includes pre- and post-1992 universities and institutions of higher education, with a good geographical spread covering urban and more suburban/rural locations, and different size organisations.

Evidence from the email survey of HR managers is in Appendix 4.

1.5.4 Case studies

Six HEIs were identified for more detailed study. These covered 'ancient', 'modern' and post-1992 institutions and included one non-university HEI. Within each HEI, two departments/units were selected to cover a range of faculties and disciplines. Evidence related to the research questions was collected from the various categories of academic staff employed in the department/unit.

Appendix 5 contains the evidence from the case studies.

2: Overview of issues

The findings from the data collected from stakeholder interviews, case-studies and email survey of heads of human resources are presented in terms of the (albeit overlapping) research questions set out in the original specification. Where appropriate, they have been sub-divided into different headings such as 'outwith institutions' or 'stakeholder views' and 'within institutions'. Equality issues have emerged, concerning the recruitment, retention and promotion of higher education staff. Government pressure is to mainstream such issues, and therefore research questions addressed in this report include reference to equal opportunities.

To protect the confidentiality of individual informants where direct quotations are used in this report or in case studies (Appendix 5), staff in permanent promoted posts (senior lecturer and above in pre-1992 HEIs, principal lecturer and above in post-1992 HEIs) may be referred to simply as 'senior staff'. Similarly, those on basic grades, or with fixed-term or hourly-paid contracts, may have their views attributed to 'junior staff'. The analysis, of course, takes account of the very different circumstances of sub-sets of the 'junior staff' group: unpromoted staff with permanent contracts; fixed-term contract staff (some of whom have fractional contracts); hourly-paid part-time teachers (most of whom are on temporary contracts), and permanent fractional contract staff. Informants compared teaching, administrative and research aspects of their posts. We have interpreted teaching as taking into account lectures and direct contact with students as well as associated activities including preparation, supervision and assessment of students, and course design and curriculum development. Administration would include background activities such as keeping course records, recruitment activities, providing references, organising staffing and class lists, and making examination arrangements.

2.1 What are the issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion?

2.1.1 Factors outwith institutions

Some factors which affect staffing are outside the control of higher education institutions. These factors include variations in supply of qualified staff for different subject disciplines, as well as location and competition in terms of pay and alternative conditions. Activities related to both the RAE and to a lesser extent to the QAA are perceived as affecting staff recruitment, retention and promotion.

Staff shortages

Many stakeholders report that there is a shortage in overall numbers of qualified staff in some disciplines and this is now encouraging some HEIs to look overseas. Evidence from one case study (Appendix 5, Case study C), where over a third of

staff come from outside the UK, indicates this is seen as necessary to attract *'top quality researchers'*.

Such is the variation across different types of HEIs and subjects that another case study (F) has only 2% of staff who were not born in the UK. Where UK professional expertise is required, eg teacher education or some aspects of law, then HEIs are less likely to seek staff from abroad.

Market forces may discourage staff from embarking upon or continuing a career in higher education. There is competition from other HEIs in recruiting staff particularly those who are desirable in the research transfer market or who are in new and rapidly expanding areas, such as sports science. It is also proving difficult and/or expensive to recruit staff with appropriate professional experience in fields such as law, accountancy and education. This is largely due to adverse salary differentials between higher education and professional practice, exacerbated by experienced staff often being older and therefore more expensive recruits than those coming through academic routes.

Academic jobs are becoming less attractive. Some staff find better options elsewhere; for example, in one creative technology department there is a drift away from academia to more stimulating work environments. For some people in high cost areas for housing and travel, salary is an important issue. In contrast, a pleasantly situated HEI reported relatively high retention of staff, and a plentiful supply of applicants for part-time work who had retired from less congenial parts of the country. Family considerations, especially children's schooling and employment opportunities for partners, affect and indeed limit the possible choices for some staff. There is some feeling that academics are an underpaid and over-burdened profession and that the things which once made the profession attractive – relative individual autonomy and the chance to pursue one's own interests – are being eroded for some staff by increasing workload and bureaucratic burdens.

Despite many statements from all sources about the pressures of administration and stress related to the joint requirements of research, administration and teaching, many interviewees nevertheless stressed the enduring attractions of the relative autonomy, variety and flexibility of academic life. For example, a previously self-employed businessman commented:

> *I had worked in what I call the real world for quite a few years and just found it boring.*

Others found academic life suited their values: a senior academic who had worked outside HE and had several years' research experience had opted for a teaching/administration role because:

> *... it is the value base of why I do things, working with get-up-and-go students.*
> (F1.4)

RAE and QAA

The perceived impact of the RAE is considerable. An individual's contribution, or potential contribution, to the RAE is very influential in selection and progression

decisions made about that individual. Moreover, the terms of the RAE are widely perceived to promote quantity rather than quality in research. The effect of the RAE has been to exaggerate the perceived importance of research (and publications) and, in some institutions, to diminish the perceived value of teaching and supporting students' learning. In several case studies, informants suggested that a heavy teaching workload inhibited their research, and as a consequence, their promotion prospects.

QAA provides an external assessment, but may have relatively little influence on the careers of individual teaching staff since, in most institutions, promotion was based on research and/or administrative responsibilities.

Need for flexibility

A frequently expressed view was the need for more flexibility in promotions and recruitment across the sector (as well as within individual institutions). Flexibility could encourage the recruitment of a more varied workforce especially if pay could be adjusted for individuals. However, unions would oppose moves away from national pay scales. Not everyone who argued for flexibility recognised that it might conflict with transparency, and that some staff might be disadvantaged by flexibility.

Equality issues

More flexibility in recruitment and promotion could counter drives for more transparency associated with fair employment practices. The study revealed a tendency for HEIs, or at least individual departments, to recruit and promote 'in their own image'. Some prestigious departments select their new staff from a narrow range of institutions, even in one case (E) having 81% staff from only three other HEIs. The effect on gender balance can be seen in three of the case study institutions, where women comprise only just over a quarter of the staff. Changes in legislation for race relations and disability are putting increasing pressures on HEIs to implement equitable staffing policies. It will no longer be acceptable to explain (as one case study did) that low staff recruitment from minority ethnic groups is due to the lack of ethnic diversity in the locality. There will be a statutory duty on HEIs to address the issue.

2.1.2 Factors within institutions

Mission and priorities

Since funding is linked to research achievements as well as student numbers, it is hardly surprising that the balance between research (and publications) and teaching is often tense, with high quality teaching being perceived as an unlikely route to promotion. In one of our less research-oriented case study HEIs, several informants saw administration as the only route to promotion. Mission statements tend to assert that both teaching and research are priorities but, in practice, most HEIs emphasised excellence in administration and research, rather than teaching, in the criteria for promotion. In these cases, full-time staff were more likely to be encouraged to delegate some of their teaching responsibilities to part-time or

hourly-paid staff than give up their administrative duties. Similarly it was routine in the more research-oriented HEIs for active researchers to relinquish their teaching to hourly-paid staff or postgraduate students. Such staff in HEIs that are trying to raise their research profile were often caught by pressure to undertake research and publish, as well as to fulfil traditionally substantial teaching commitments and even administrative tasks as well. Staff who wanted to move into research often reported that their research was not valued and was squeezed out by the inexorable demands of teaching.

Although HEIs have centrally defined mission statements, how much variation in practice is tolerated between different departments? The case studies show that most departments have delegated responsibilities for important aspects of staff recruitment, appointment and promotion, and the ways in which these are interpreted will affect the retention of staff. Individual departments rather than the institution as a whole may seek Investors in People (IIP) status. It is more difficult to sustain even a department-centred system when there is geographical spread of departments, across different countries, especially if the communication system does not facilitate transparency in the implementation of policies and procedures.

Unsurprisingly, we discovered diversity across the HE sector, in mission statements, priorities and in academic cultures as described by interviewees. In all case studies, we also discovered diversity within the HEI, and in most cases within departments. Moreover, although all our case study interviewees could be seen to be contributing to their HEI's complex mission, by no means all of them felt that their contribution was valued, either by the department or by the institution. Where the dominant priority was research, those with heavy teaching loads felt less valued, and similarly in predominantly teaching institutions, those trying to establish a research culture sometimes felt marginalised and undervalued.

Explicit policies and procedures

Many stakeholders have commented on the lack of transparent promotions procedures as well as a lack of internal promotion opportunities and reward systems. One stakeholder even stated that promotion procedures in higher education are "*shrouded in secrecy*".

Not all HEIs have explicit policies and procedures related to staff appointments and promotions although most address some aspects such as procedures for shortlisting and interviewing. Certainly there is lack of transparency in HEIs that have adopted more 'flexible' approaches to salary and conditions of service. The benefits of transparency depend on who is talking. Senior staff in case study A thought that the high retention of staff could be improved even further if the university provided resources that allowed them to offer individuals attractive positions and packages to stay. (In this HEI and others, it is possible for staff in shortage areas to 'negotiate' their promotion, as an alternative to taking up an offer elsewhere.) However, their more junior colleagues felt the system lacked transparency and was too much in the hands of others. Career progress and promotion may rely on the support of the professoriate. Policies and intentions for

staffing may be superseded by the need for departments to reduce their budgets in order to help the institution to reduce or balance the overall deficit.

In the last decade, expectations of the qualifications and publications record of candidates for a first lecturing post were deemed to have risen, so that many new appointees are likely to be at least in their late twenties.

Pay, status and contracts

More than a third of all academic staff on the lecturer scale are on fixed-term contracts or are part-time. In addition there are the many hourly-paid staff who remain largely unknown and unmonitored in HEIs. While some part-timers have secure, fractional contracts through choice, and may have been through normal appointment procedures, many others (including hourly-paid staff) do not have to go through such procedures. Recruitment of such staff is usually done on the basis of personal recommendation, and in some cases there is no-one in an HEI with an overview of all these staff.

Only one of our case studies institutions did not make extensive use of hourly-paid staff. Although we found some who were glad to work in this way, because it was not their only source of income (see Profile 7), most hourly-paid staff and staff on short-term contracts usually hope that a less than full-time post will lead to a full-time, long-term appointment.

Profile 1: Lecturer on fixed-term contracts (FTCs)

Fixed-term contracts for 11 years, permanent lecturer for 3 years at the HEI where he completed undergraduate and postgraduate degrees – white, male, 40s.

Appointment: He was appointed to a teaching fellowship for 2 years and then to a 4-year FTC with the understanding that the post would become permanent at the end of the period. The RAE intervened and the knock-on effect of buying in researchers at senior level was that junior posts were frozen. His FTC became a rolling FTC. It was not until 1998, at the age of 40, that he was appointed to a permanent post.

Retention: He has confidence in his teaching ability which attracts large numbers of students to his courses, but he feels 'it counts for nothing'. He has been retained by his optimism, by the psychological effect of insecurity which left him feeling personally worthless, and by an unwillingness to start again outside academia. He was not offered any staff development during his 11 years on FTC. He enjoys his conditions of work. Under the new chair of the department, he has taken on an administrative role.

Promotion: He remains optimistic, but sees little chance. He is no longer mobile. He took on a first mortgage at 41, and had his first child at 42. He is used as a 'teaching workhorse' so has little time for research.

Some interviewees were able to look back on many years of insecurity before they had achieved a permanent contract, while others remained more or less hopeful for the future (see Profile 1). However, it is clear from this study that a series of fixed-term contracts does not provide secure employment or offer substantial promotion opportunities.

The virtues of flexibility in terms of employment emerged in more than one case study. For example, in case study F, some managers would have valued the opportunity to provide incentive allowances for junior staff taking on (possibly temporary) administrative responsibilities.

Everyone interviewed in one high achieving institution displayed levels of discontent about salaries – especially those who had actually applied for industry positions but had decided that these positions did not provide them with as much freedom and autonomy to do their research as higher education institutions did.

Staff development

Some institutions offer inductions as well as further development opportunities. (See Appendix 4 for further details.)

Hourly-paid staff suffered from the lack of staff development opportunities in some institutions; for some, opportunities were available, but in their own time and without pay. In case study B, where there are problems of retention among the large number of hourly-paid staff, there are comparatively good support mechanisms for the group and they could make the transition to lecturing staff.

Some staff also feel constrained by their teaching workload from pursuing research and staff development opportunities, which in turn weakens their promotion prospects.

In general there is a perceived lack of funding for external staff development. Often interviewees acknowledged good intentions, but felt they were not enough:

> *"They are very much into trying to let you develop the way you want in the department, but again there is not much money there to help you."*

Equality issues

A challenge to transparency is when management information systems are not equally efficient for all staff, as in case study F where a distant campus had inadequate access to the HEI's system which included information about staff development and promotion opportunities.

Some equal opportunities issues are unresolved (such as continuing alleged racial and sexual discrimination) and some are ignored or not perceived as problems (part-timers and hourly-paid staff). Frequent arguments are that it is difficult to recruit staff from minority groups to work in 'white' areas. Yet even in our case study HEIs in culturally diverse areas, there was little sign of appointing staff from 'the whole community'.

Age structures of staff can inhibit promotion. This is clearly linked with indirect discrimination against women, or less frequently men, who have had career breaks for child rearing. There also seems to be more generalised prejudice against older staff. As one informant in her 50s, who had spent most of her career on a series of fixed-term contracts, put it:

> *"If you have a good idea in your 20s, they give you the job; if you are in your 30s, they give somebody else the job; if you are in your 40s plus, they tend to sack you for it."*

2.2 How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?

HEIs adopt various strategies to recruit and sustain high quality staff. These are listed as summary points below as examples of what is being done. These points arise from within institutions, through our case studies and the email survey completed by HR managers but clearly not all institutions would subscribe to all the strategies.

2.2.1 Recruitment

To encourage recruitment HEIs have developed:

- policies on equal opportunities (including disability), Investors in People status and widening participation, giving institutions a progressive reputation
- well-documented and thorough recruitment and appointment procedures for most staff
- single long-term lecturer scales
- flexibility in deciding the point on the scale for appointment of new staff eg in recognising experience outside HE
- support for non-teaching staff with necessary skills and interest/enthusiasm to become lecturers
- incentives such as generous removal expenses and start-up packages
- electronic posting of academic vacancies, to increase overseas applications
- collaboration with outside organisations such as NHS Trusts.

Salary issues were the most frequently recurring themes in the responses from the HR managers as inhibitors to recruitment (Appendix 4).

> *"The national conditions of service in new universities inhibit flexibility, stop us paying the appropriate rates for academic jobs and have unnecessary restrictions on working practices. This means that we cannot increase productivity to pay for much needed pay increases to recruit quality staff."*
>
> (Human Resource Manager, Post-92 HEI)

Other constraints on recruitment were similar to those mentioned earlier in this report, including competition from non-university employers and from other HEIs leading to *"RAE recruitment wars"*, the perceived reputation of an institution, and the general over-emphasis on research.

Reputation in research or in quality of students is deemed the major factor for satisfactory recruitment to departments and HEIs.

2.2.2 Retention

There are only slight variation rates in retention and turnover rates for different disciplines across the sector. There are greater variations in retention between case study institutions between disciplines.

To encourage retention, HEIs promote:

- equal opportunities strategies and action plans
- secondments and leave of absence schemes including opportunities to maintain links with industry or professional practice/consultancy
- generous provision for sabbaticals and externally funded research
- staff development programmes and mentoring for all staff including part-timers and hourly-paid staff who are likely to have regular teaching commitments
- schemes to encourage fast track promotion
- a pleasant campus and positive institutional ethos (and apparent *"lack of political intrigue"*)
- job satisfaction, particularly through direct contact with students, working with supportive colleagues, an open apolitical culture and relative autonomy
- redeployment, regrading and retraining
- employment of research and teaching assistants to stimulate research culture and free up teaching staff to undertake research (there are positive and negative effects to this)
- conversion of fixed-term contracts to permanent contracts
- 'prizes' via external funding for good teaching and learning
- local teaching fellowship schemes.

These various approaches offer no quick fix and need to be carefully implemented. For example, although senior staff may advocate mentoring for all staff, more junior staff indicated in one case study that its application was patchy. Although employing research and teaching assistants to free teaching staff to undertake research is generally viewed positively (at least by other staff), it may put undue pressure on junior staff to take on more teaching than is good for their research careers. Generous provision for external research proved not to be generous enough for one course leader who reported having to hand back a research grant because of pressures of course development and teaching.

Some, though not all, case study institutions were concerned about how they could reward and retain good teachers. One (case study D) had completed a round of promotions targeted to recognise excellence in learning, teaching and assessment. Several junior and senior staff in case study F discussed the possibility of providing reward and development for *"those who are ambitious in terms of their teaching"*. A readership-equivalent scheme to enable good teachers to develop their practice and support colleagues was suggested.

HR managers mentioned the importance of supportive management structures for retention. Some rated the ethos of the institution as being more important than any specific policy or initiative. A positive ethos might encourage team working and the development of work/life balance policies.

Membership of the Institute for Learning and Teaching (ILT) has provoked a mixed reaction from our informants. Some (especially those from the research-focused HEIs) thought it irrelevant to their business; a few individuals and some HR respondents thought it would enhance the status of teaching and encourage teaching staff to remain in their HEI.

Questioning the advisability of retention, an informant from case study D commented:

> *"There is no difficulty in retaining staff, rather the reverse. Higher education might be improved if there was more mobility."*

However, for HEIs that have invested in their staff, poor retention is perceived as problematic. In case study C, a substantial proportion of new entrants leave within the first few years. Contributory factors are perceived to be: poor salary levels, resulting in inability to survive in the city, particularly with a family; the probation/major review system which for some is a deterrent; poor mentoring; and detrimental aspects of the work environment (bureaucracy, lack of collegiality, poor office facilities). For 'staff who only teach', a strong research ethos can inhibit retention. It is important that their work is valued and acknowledged, but all too often informants indicated that their teaching was undervalued and unrecognised. Similarly, in an HEI with a predominantly teaching culture, we found researchers who felt they would move eventually in search of *"a proper research culture"*. Again, the issue of diversity arises: all HEIs need diversity in their staff, but appear to have difficulty in conveying to their staff the message that diversity is valued.

2.2.3 Promotion

Although 80% of respondents to the email survey reported that their HEIs had promotion policies applicable to permanent and fixed-term/part-time staff, only 14% said they had such policies for hourly-paid staff (see Appendix 4, Table 1). A third of respondents had fixed promotions criteria that were applied across all departments, but well over half adopted more flexible criteria.

Policies and practices that support the promotion of high quality academic staff echo many of those listed under retention (eg single lecturer scale, sabbaticals). Others were more directed towards career advancement or to the smooth running of the institution:

- transparent and objective criteria for promotion
- quality assessment of teaching skills of promotion candidates
- in-house job evaluation
- appraisal scheme
- rotation of staff - reward for temporary responsibility.

Management can manipulate progression by the allocation of tasks and opportunities. While fast-track promotion schemes benefit high fliers (especially research stars in some HEIs) and provide HEIs with more flexibility, other staff who are by-passed feel undervalued. Whether or not they remain in the institution

seems to depend on the status and positive aspects of their HEI and on the priority they put on their teaching. Staff felt that restructuring and rationalisation in their HEIs created both insecurity and poorer prospects for promotion.

It is clear that good teaching alone is rarely sufficient to gain promotion, even in those HEIs that presented themselves as predominantly teaching organisations. Promoted staff may be diverted to administration, management and/or research, spending less time in direct contact with students. Some promoted staff in our case studies regretted this. Schemes such as a readership-equivalent with responsibility for working with colleagues to develop teaching practice might help keep good teachers in the lecture-room, if that is where they wish to be. It also seems necessary to make provision for identifying and rewarding good teaching wherever it occurs, given the many positive comments about the quality of teaching and the commitment of hourly-paid staff in our case study institutions.

2.3 What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?

This question triggered comments from all sources both about the standards of student performance and about the quality of staff and their work – especially research. It is especially important to consider whether or not initiatives designed to improve standards actually threaten them.

2.3.1 The Research Assessment Exercise

Although no direct evidence is available, many stakeholder informants intuitively felt that good treatment of staff would lead to enhanced RAE and QAA ratings. However, it is acknowledged in the broad academic community that the RAE has also led to an aggressive 'research transfer market' predominantly benefiting those already at the top of the senior lecturer grade. In some faculties, headhunting to enhance RAE ratings has had impact on the progression of existing staff.

One desired effect of the RAE has been increased output of published research. However, many informants are insistent that this has had a detrimental effect on quality of research, not least because often research is presented for publication before there has been sufficient time for reflection.

2.3.2 Quality of teaching

HEIs have their own internal quality assessment procedures. For one, this includes assessments of teaching skills of promotion candidates. While budget constraints may result in only a small number of staff being promoted, this could be interpreted as a positive quality assurance aspect. At least, it sends a message to staff that high quality teaching is valued by the HEI.

There is some uncertainty whether or not the use of postgraduates and other part-time staff affects quality. Some HEIs use postgraduates and other part-time staff to teach 1st and 2nd years. Provided such staff are adequately supported, this is not necessarily detrimental to the student experience, and we found some

evidence of high commitment amongst such staff (see Profile 8). There is wider use of part-time staff in specialist HE colleges. Stakeholders consider that the use, for example in art and music schools, of deploying practising professionals enhances quality, and could be increased.

While continuing professional development (CPD) and ILT are designed to show a commitment to professionalism, there is some disagreement among stakeholders and HEI staff about the value of ILT. Membership of ILT is not encouraged in all HEIs.

In case study E, quality assessment by the QAA has had a positive impact when poor ratings have driven curriculum development and improvements in student attainment. Some staff found the process disruptive for their students, and had arranged for a small group of staff to handle most of the administrative work for the QAA, to ensure that students did not suffer (case study F).

2.3.3 QAA combined with RAE

The combination of QAA assessments of teaching quality with the RAE has pressured departmental development in some institutions. This development takes one of two forms, both of which appear to enhance the parity of teaching and research.

a) In a department with a tradition of excellence in teaching but little record of research, case study D2, moves to increase research output focus on pedagogics as an appropriate area of investigation.

b) A department with a high RAE rating, but a low assessment of teaching quality, case study E2, viewed the improvement of teaching and student attainment as necessitating cultural change. A comprehensive development, negotiated piecemeal through institutional committees, included the creation and staffing of an education unit with a director at professorial level, a complete review of the curriculum, the identification of staff training needed in teaching skills, and moves to build on and strengthen existing research in pedagogics.

In both cases, there remains anxiety that the RAE does not recognise pedagogic research as of equal value to research in other sciences.

2.3.4 Student performance

Staff in some HEIs feel they attract students by their reputation and by word of mouth. If these current students are of high calibre, their recommendations will attract similar students. In other HEIs, graduate employment statistics are seen as confirmation of quality of teaching.

2.4 What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?

There is consensus among informants that the domination of the two traditional models prevails: become a research star or a manager. Those who try to bridge

both can feel powerless. Profile 2 illustrates some of the conflicting priorities in higher education.

Profile 2: Head of Department

White, male, 50s, UK, at institution for 25 years, had experience at other institutions. Believes that "'if you are an academic you can't really make the separation between work and home".

Management style: More of an academic leader than a manager, a strong defender of the traditional values of academia. Does not like the way that much of the system is now geared to create an individual atomised environment, believes that this goes against the notion of a community of scholars.

"The needs of the institution are entirely different and part of my job is to defend this group against the school, and against the university. So, whatever their needs are I am not that concerned about it, except when they tell me about things that I regard as important and that is ideas, getting good intellectuals in..."

~~*Profile 2 continued...*~~

Management approach: Feels that he has little influence over the approach that he takes as there is a high level of control from the institution. *"It is difficult in a very large organisation to have some influence about what's going on, so I do not feel empowered at the moment, I feel the opposite, I feel disenfranchised. I'm not able to influence the way things have gone."*

Although very highly respected within his specific discipline, a world-class researcher and regarded by many as a 'big star' of academia, is still unable to have much say with regards to management of the department. *"(This institution) is a big pond and it's difficult to be a big fish here."*

Management view: Feels that should have more freedom in recruiting and appointing people.

Also believes that the RAE is putting too much pressure on academics to produce quantity rather than quality in terms of research output. *"Our dean, I think, is of the form activity school of thought, get it out, whereas I am not. I'd much rather read one bloody good article, or one bloody good book than reams and reams and reams of material which people had thrown out."*

In planning a career, choice of institution is vital since researchers will not flourish in predominantly teaching institutions, and those whose priority is teaching are likely to remain at low status in high-flying research HEIs. The evidence suggests that the RAE has emphasised this divide, as the research-focused HEIs attract more experienced research staff and have the culture and resources to support them. Profile 3 is an example of the fast track, headhunted researcher.

Profile 3: Professor

White, male, 40, UK, first and second degrees from the HEI where he is now working; post-doc at Oxbridge, first appointment and subsequent chair at prestigious US HEI..

Appointment: Had contacts at present HEI, head hunted and offered post, tailored to requirements. Individually negotiated salary. Keen to return to UK for family reasons.

Retention: Lower teaching load than previous post. Can concentrate on graduate classes. Salary level is OK but pension and health benefits poor compared to US. Could possibly return to the US. Appreciates value of own career route, "*Once you are in a job in a good institution then it's easier then to find a reasonable job.*"

Promotion: Onwards and upwards.

For those HEIs that may wish to increase their research activity, there are considerable difficulties. Staff are already likely to have substantial teaching and administrative workloads and will mostly be inexperienced researchers. Bringing new research experienced staff into the HEI signals a new priority but to change the institutional ethos and culture is a slow process.

As with all professions, there are those staff who plan their progression carefully and those who are more haphazard or see their career progression being lateral rather than vertical. At a certain point, some staff recognise that they may not have progressed as far as they wished and remain (disgruntled or happy) at a modest level. Profile 4 illustrates someone relatively happy with her lot.

There are opportunities to fast track through an HEI's special initiative or selective recruitment and promotions procedures (see Profile 5). It also helps if an individual was already known in the organisation (see Profile 3). If progression is slow then researchers may move on to another institution. Deliberate specialisation in a shortage area can lead to rapid career progression, and the study identified at least one individual who had opted for special responsibility (as equal opportunities officer) which had led quickly to promotion. This move proved a cul-de-sac as the post was susceptible to the changing priorities of the head of the institution; and the skills developed and demonstrated in the post were not recognised as appropriate for further promotion. To revert to subject specialism would have incurred a status and salary drop for this individual.

Profile 4: A 'typical' woman's career

Principal lecturer, white, female, 40s, non-UK. Had 'no intention' to teach. Postgraduate study took her to America and then 'events' led to her settling in England. She was able to get hourly-paid work as a language teacher. She completed City & Guilds FE teaching certificate. For a time she was completing her PhD, teaching in two HEIs (including case study D), and bringing up a family.

Appointment: She was appointed to a 0.5 lectureship which she saw advertised. She then applied for a full-time vacancy, which was advertised but which she found out about internally.

Retention: "*I work with what I have got. I wouldn't call it a career. My job serves a purpose. It is important so I do apply myself when I am in the place, but there are other things I am interested in. I am a mother, I am a friend, as well as being a lecturer.*" She enjoys her working conditions and her autonomy.

Promotion: She became principal lecturer after managing a large part-time staff. This remains her responsibility.

Profile 5: Fast track, entrepreneurial manager

White, female, 40s, UK, degree in linguistics, followed by world travel, EFL teaching and qualifications, and finally a scholarship to complete MA.

Appointment: One-year fixed-term to cover for maternity leave.

Retention: Organisational and management skills 'spotted' by senior management, given another 1-year contract to report on viability and future development of teaching area. At end of the year, appointment made permanent.

Promotion: Within 3 years of permanent appointment was appointed to lead new, merged department. Applied for further promotion to professorial level, not shortlisted. Criteria for appointments list excellence in management and leadership, entrepreneurial activity and research. Believes that, in practice, those who have developed research are successful candidates. Does not link unsuccessful application to her gender.

Across the sector there are staff development initiatives designed to support both individuals and institutions – goals which are sometimes irreconcilable. Staff may be supported in gaining a higher degree, in developing teaching or research skills, or making links with industry. HEIs also provide induction programmes and in-service workshops especially for teaching skills and awareness raising. It emerged from the study that although the main route for promotion for teaching staff is through taking on administrative and management responsibility, there is little training available for managers. This not only disadvantages the managers, but sometimes also their staff, where they find themselves in inefficiently organised units that lack a coherent and feasible staff or department development strategy.

Career development often has opportunistic components. Institutional change and restructuring can provide new career opportunities. The outcome could also be

negative if expansion and mergers bring an influx of new staff perceived as damaging promotion prospects.

What remains exciting in higher education is the diversity of routes and backgrounds of academic staff. Profile 6 is of a career changer who brings industrial experience to teaching, research and administration. In contrast to this is the contribution from an older associate tutor (Profile 7) who offers his lifetime professional experience for young people entering the profession. It is a challenge for the sector to recognise the benefits of this diversity and reward those who have come through less traditional routes.

Profile 6: Lecturer – Career changer/Late entrant

White, female, 50s, UK, newly appointed lecturer, previously worked in industry. Taught part-time in FE and training roles including at this HEI, working in discipline which found it hard to recruit.

Appointment: Moved from part-time training officer to full-time lecturer. Nearly did not accept because offered fixed-term contract in industry, but keen to get involved in academic role so accepted.

Retention: Much of career spent balancing work and family, enjoyed the flexibility of HE teaching and developing and supporting students, now getting involved in research, taken on major administrative role, Valued her role. "*If I were really worried about pay I would have taken the training role in industry but I would have less personal satisfaction* (in working briefly with trainees) *...not be seeing people* (students) *on a 3 year basis.*" Could go back to industry but decided to make commitment here.

Promotion: Not very ambitious (or optimistic); would prefer 'management route' as that was the "*only way to get any influence over teaching*".

Profile 7: Hourly-paid Associate Tutor

Part-time hourly-paid Associate Tutor has been teaching in HE for last 7 years since retirement – white, male, 50s, British, retired schoolteacher.

Appointment: Recruited through personal contact, no formal application form or interview. Submitted CV subsequently for OfSTED requirements.

Retention: Enjoys the work, "*a wonderful opportunity*"; support is available if needed, appreciates flexibility. Attends staff meetings, although no longer paid for attendance. Financial rewards are not great, but thinks terms and conditions are "*fine at this stage of career*". Appreciates that could not afford to work in this way if not already in receipt of pension, but feels he is "*not exploited, as would not have done it if there had not been job satisfaction in it.*"

Promotion: *Not expected.*

2.4.1 Equal opportunities issues

Compared with the associate tutor (Profile 7), the occasional tutor (Profile 8) resents what she sees as the rough deal for part-timers. Remuneration is limited to

student contact hours. There is a lack of consultation with part-timers on academic matters or governance; and, in this case, no access to staff development opportunities that would enhance promotion possibilities. Age discrimination has been raised previously in this report, and still is likely to have more effect on women who have taken career breaks than others. Staff from groups under-represented in higher education promotions (including women, fixed-term and part-time staff) may be precluded from making their best contributions to higher education and from routes that would develop their own careers.

Profile 8: 'Occasional' Tutor

White, female, 30s, non-UK, studying for PhD part-time, now in 6th year. Previous experience as academic teacher and researcher, had been mature student at HEI.

Appointment: Offered various teaching roles by different staff over the years, no formal recruitment process, *"a casual chat with the lecturer"*. Role is *"very part-time... if you have two classes a week, you're doing quite well"*. Has had numerous contracts but no job descriptions. *"The job we do is much more broad and wide than would be indicated for the pay you get for 1 hour contact with students. "*

Retention: Paid £29 per hour of contact but has to do 5-6 hours extra work per hour of contact. Finds herself explaining to the lecturers what they need to do as she has more experience on the courses than they have (lecturer just gives the lecture).

Despite the fact that many part-time teachers feel pretty hard done by, *"the dedication of part-timers is just incredible because they really know their stuff."* This is reflected in them receiving excellent student evaluations, *"far, far better than the full-time staff"*. There is a 5:1 ratio of part-time teachers to full-time teachers.

There is no involvement of part-time teachers in governance or departmental issues – they are not even allowed to look at the exam papers. Facilities are also very poor. *"The whole thing is on a very casual unprofessional level."*

Promotion: Would like to gain a full-time academic post, but feels no chance of post at present HEI as *"only takes people with good publishing track records"* although the *"system here is untransparent, definitely in regards to women"*.

2.5 What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?

2.5.1 Stakeholders' views

In this section, the responses from stakeholders are separated from other informants since they relate more to what HEIs 'should' do rather than examples of observed practice. For a more detailed discussion, see Appendix 3. Stakeholders generally welcome national initiatives such as Athena (the project to advance women in science, engineering and technology in HE), and the work of the Equality Challenge Unit.

Recruitment

For stakeholders, best practice in recruitment implies that HEIs should recruit from the widest possible pool, using open and fair advertising and publicity of posts. All staff involved in recruitment and selection should have training in equal

opportunities following national guidelines. At present there is a perceived lack of suitable training materials. It is important that policies and mechanisms are in place to provide baseline information about applications and recruitment so that the impact of policies can be assessed and acted upon.

Retention

Stakeholders suggest staff will remain in posts longer where the job itself is attractive and there is relevant staff development and meaningful annual appraisal. Management at all levels should have access to training, and this should include support for vice-chancellors e.g. through mentoring schemes.

Stakeholders also endorse the principle of paying the best more. This was put forward as a major suggestion, although some stakeholders note that there is more flexibility in the current system than is often assumed.

Promotion

The question of policy ownership is vital in higher education. Stakeholders favour open and transparent promotion policies that affect all staff, including senior management. However it is recognised that it may be difficult to reconcile transparency with flexibility in promotion.

2.5.2 Within institutions

The following examples of 'best practice' were put forward from their own experience by informants in the case studies.

Recruitment:

- involving departmental staff in recruitment procedures
- holding regular reviews of staff to translate fixed/part-time staff to permanent contracts. This does not currently occur in all HEIs.

Retention:

- providing access to quality staff development (support for new staff; reduce isolation; sabbatical opportunities)
- establishing and sustaining mentoring schemes (but a lot depends on the mentor/mentee relationship)
- providing imaginative and effective leadership and management
- offering additional pay incentives via, for example, a research incentive scheme
- developing schemes to reward outstanding teaching
- recognising and involving academic staff unions.

Promotion:

- holding high profile reviews of promotions criteria and acknowledging the need for openness. Many informants (including some of the stakeholders)

endorsed the wish for transparency accompanied by monitoring and subsequent action about identified problems

- developing in-house job evaluation schemes – possibly following Equal Opportunities Commission guidelines
- recognising and rewarding excellence in teaching and learning in promotion procedures.

2.6 How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?

Positive strategies were suggested for developing academic staff careers.

Staff development strategies should identify needs and plan for CPD at an early stage, and provide opportunities for staff to diversify and develop in their early careers. There should be clearer and faster career structures. General principles include the development of staff movement in and out of the HE sector for more flexible career paths (eg through use of fellowships and secondments). HEIs can be insular and would benefit from more links with the local community and business, and indeed other HEIs. Such links could include flexible contracts for joint appointments with other sectors. The sector should look at the wider role of HEIs in society, and at best practice in managing staff in other sectors such as the civil service and local government.

In principle, the sector should foster approaches that produce a more altruistic, inclusive and collegiate culture. This could entail enhancing and balancing the aspects of academic work that attract and retain staff, namely autonomy, variety and personal flexibility.

Financial strategies recommended include:

- enhancement of basic pay via national pay awards and a revised salary structure (as recommended in the Bett Report), to allow staff to have a reasonable standard of living and employment mobility
- performance related pay
- a single pension scheme across all HEIs
- a national subsidised mortgage scheme
- an increased London allowance.

HEIs need imaginative and effective departmental leaders with greater people management skills at all levels of academic management. In particular it is very important to have supportive management at early and formative parts of one's career. At present this appears to be very patchy.

Some informants think that these principles would be easier to enact if there were a lighter touch assessment and quality assurance and a decrease in external monitoring.

2.6.1 Specific points from institutions

Findings from the case studies suggest the following.:

Recruitment

HEIs should use better targeted and more reliable selection processes, with systematic assessment tailored to specific roles.

Retention

HEIs should:

- restructure grades and salary scales to reward different levels of contribution more accurately, to provide incentives and remove bottlenecks at the top of Senior Lecturer grade. Improve the non-cash elements of remuneration packages
- improve people management skills at all levels in HEIs
- look at the roles of part-time, fixed-term contract and hourly-paid staff to provide better career development opportunities and to prevent over-use of hourly-paid staff
- improve staff appraisal and make available career planning advice
- provide sabbaticals to refresh industrial/professional experience and to facilitate contacts with external sectors
- ensure the full breadth of useful contributions from staff is recognised in a tangible way, and that clear messages emanate from management about the value of all areas of academic activity: teaching, research and administration
- regulate and reduce workloads
- implement a retention allowance
- reduce administrative burdens.

Promotion

HEIs should:

- provide greater transparency in promotion processes (eg for older entrants)
- reward good teaching rather than linking promotion to administrative roles. There is a lot of support for teaching to be given greater recognition. For example those interviewed in case study B cited greater intrinsic satisfaction being gained from teaching than from research or administration.

2.6.2 Equal opportunities

In terms of equal opportunities, it might be necessary to reintroduce financial incentives and set targets for the employment of ethnic minority staff. Certainly equal opportunities should become embedded in policies, practices and culture with a major review of progress.

The irony of case study C is that the evidence shows that much of the policies, practices and environment here are inimical to depth and breadth of career

opportunities. Nevertheless, many applicants seek posts here and many staff have chosen to stay.

Perhaps there is most concern in the case studies from and about those at the bottom of the career ladder. It is clear that there is major variation in the treatment of fixed-term, temporary part-time and hourly-paid staff compared to permanent staff in terms of human resources policies and procedures. This is evident from the HEFCE survey of HR managers (see Appendix 4, Table 1). As an example, induction for permanent staff was available in all respondent institutions, but available for hourly-paid staff in only 46%. There is a similar disparity in other policies and procedures that apply to hourly-paid staff. HEIs should address reasons why junior and hourly-paid staff are overburdened, exploited and inadequately supported. Both these groups need to be more involved in governance and 'departmental life'. HEIs should review the 'use and abuse' of hourly-paid staff.

2.7 What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?

It has been very difficult to gain more than general comments in response to this question as the possible scenarios are so varied in scope and size. Below is a brief summary of the comments from all sources.

In the case studies, all the staff appeared to be working very hard so a redistribution of resources among HEIs would not be helpful.

> *" Implementation of the HR strategy is likely to have only a marginal impact on recruitment and retention because the funding is non-recurrent and the additional money is insufficient to achieve major structural change."*
> (pre-92 university response to Human Resource Manager survey)

Therefore some fresh resources would be required to address issues of tangible recognition for teaching and to meet cost of living issues. Fresh resources would also be required to address the teaching burden and alleviate the overuse and exploitation of hourly-paid staff.

Changing institutional cultures is notoriously difficult, but appropriate investment would be returned by having long term strategies to reduce wasteful turnover, to review management development costs, and to widen participation in staffing. Certainly unresolved equal opportunities issues need to be addressed at national level. HEIs should be aware of the likely impact of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), and the need for family friendly policies.

Stakeholders estimate the cost of addressing equal opportunities issues as between £188 million and £300 million. However, there are costs in doing nothing (poor performance, legal claims for 'equal pay for equal work' cases, low morale, HE reputation). The current situation is not amenable to 'quick-fix' solutions: generational differences cannot be alleviated quickly. There is a demographic time bomb that could be defused by encouraging today's graduates to enter academic

life, and planning postgraduate opportunities to support the development of academic human resource.

Great care is required not to cause further damage to the aspects that the staff value most highly and to sustain what is good in the sector.

Stakeholders suggested it would be helpful to set up a workforce development plan and a national body to take over responsibility for staff development.

3: Accommodating tensions and contradictions

Any proposed strategies and policies will have to recognise the need to balance and accommodate certain tensions in HE. They should also take account of the diversity within the sector, within individual HEIs and within departments. Staff in HE demonstrate diversity in their strengths, in their contributions to their institution, and in their individual aspirations. There is therefore no simple panacea for the problems uncovered in this study, although policies at national, institutional and even departmental level can help. Examining some of the tensions and internal contradictions in the views we have collected may contribute to development of appropriate policies at national and local level.

3.1 Research and administration vs teaching

The dominance of research activities as criteria for recognition, reward, selection and promotion has the effect of squeezing out effort on teaching – the latter is sometimes seen as *detrimental* to career progress. The RAE sharpens this, and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) – as presently constituted – is deemed not to enhance the status of teaching but just adds to bureaucracy. The alternative route to advancement is administration/management, which is similarly incompatible with either substantial teaching or research.

Despite various mission statements, teaching is therefore the least extrinsically rewarded activity in higher education. Are there ways of encouraging good teachers to develop their careers without moving away from direct contact with students?

3.2 Specialisation vs being an all-rounder

This is a tension which affects individuals in their career development in HE, and has implications for their departments.

Being a specialist (eg having a tight research or administrative focus) benefits career progress. All-rounders do not gain the appropriate 'reputation', and can become 'work-horses'. Managers recognise that they need a range of staff with a diversity of strengths, but there is great pressure in research-focused HEIs to exclusively recruit and reward 'stars'. Having a department of 'stars' brings a

whole host of problems, and can create the situation where the bulk of teaching and other work seen as a 'chore' is outsourced to casual, peripheral staff.

At the same time, too much specialisation inhibits variety, one of the most attractive aspects of working in HE for many staff. Is specialisation the only alternative for an ambitious academic, or can we develop policies which allow all-rounders to progress and to continue to use all their strengths?

3.3 Changing cultures vs quality provision

Staff are under pressure to be successful members of the research culture. HEIs struggling to enhance their research output may release teaching staff to engage in research by also taking on part-time and/or casual and peripheral staff. This has implications both for the quality of the services provided for students and for potential exploitation of staff.

How can methods of funding higher education better reflect quality of teaching as a priority for students and staff?

3.4 Academe vs practitioner focus

The dilemma here is whether to concentrate on 'academic' research or to encourage links with industry, external professions and bodies. The two approaches are rarely found together within the same unit. The first approach gains top RAE recognition and 'reputation' – at the individual level this leads to rapid career advancement. The second may be more lucrative for the individual in terms of consultancy for industry and business but less so for those in lower paid professions (e.g. education, social work) who need to maintain contact with practitioners to retain their credibility as teachers.

The question remains for institutions who wish to recruit and retain high quality staff about how to acknowledge and respond to the different contexts in which they are working.

3.5 Individualism vs team/collegial values

The best way to gain the so-called merit-based rewards and become a 'star' is to behave selfishly. This may produce an elite who offer poor role models for co-operation and collaboration. Although the RAE and QAA processes are both to some extent designed as a 'team games', the rewards for a team player within an HEI may be less than the rewards for a 'star'. At the same time the notion of collegiality and close collaboration is cherished among academics sharing the same discipline – but this embodies a recognition of individual freedom and autonomy.

It would be helpful to iron out some of the policy contradictions that encourage individualism and competition at the cost of collegiality.

3.6 Network/own image/expediency vs equality of opportunity

There is a great reluctance in high status institutions and departments to recruit staff and recognise qualities other than those perceived as traditional. There is an assumption that career route and background are critical; staff are drawn from a narrow and elite range. This seems to offer an expedient way to ensure the maintenance of the culture and priorities important to an HEI but is in opposition to equal opportunities employment policies.

3.7 Equality of opportunity vs flexibility

It may be expedient to offer individualised salaries and accelerated progress to individuals with scarce attributes. However, such approaches cause demotivation among other staff, and may perpetuate wide scale discrimination against women, ethnic and other minorities, and result in an outmoded value system.

Institutions that deploy more equitable and transparent policies and procedures could benefit from more diverse recruitment of those outside the norm of linear careers. Does higher education benefit sufficiently from the experience of recruits into teaching of those who have taken unusual career routes and breaks?

3.8 Status vs salary

While university staff appreciate autonomy and a relatively high status, there are tensions for skilled practitioners in some areas where their salaries would be higher outside HE. For example there has been a reversal of the traditional situation where university lecturers had higher salaries than those teaching in school classrooms. The current maximum annual salary for the advanced skills classroom teacher is at least £3000 more than the maximum a principal lecturer in university can earn with discretionary points. Given the current age profile of HE staff in teacher education there could soon be serious staffing and retention problems.

3.9 Autonomy vs control

Academics are attracted by the large degree of autonomy. However, there is often difficulty in ensuring responsibility and accountability. Introducing control mechanisms inhibits that autonomy and can reduce creativity.

3.10 Management vs leadership

Academics profess to prefer inclusive styles of governance. They generally accept guidance from well respected academic leaders who treat them as peers.

Introducing tighter management systems may address some problems but weakens trust, collegiality and autonomy. Moreover reluctance to acknowledge the necessary skills involved in people management, leads to inappropriate management styles and general dissatisfaction. Is it not unrealistic to expect

academics to adopt management roles, even temporary ones, without appropriate training and support?

3.11 Opportunities for entry vs exploitation

The heavy use of fixed-term contracts and hourly-paid staff offers institutions an apparent degree of flexibility in times of financial uncertainty (or could be construed as an abrogation of responsibility by senior managers and passing on all risks to the staff). It may also seem to offer staff a convenient foothold into an academic teaching career. However, poor pay, conditions and peripheralisation seem to indicate a degree of exploitation, often over many years. The lack of career structures and transition mechanisms to more secure posts also mean that this offers little real opportunity to many.

It is recognised that some HEIs have begun to make contractual changes. However, it is vital that the remainder of the sector that has become so dependent on fixed-term contracts and hourly-paid staff should address how to support these staff for the mutual benefit of individuals and institutions.

3.12 Retention vs benefits of varied experience

Individual institutions invest in recruitment and staff development and wish to retain their able staff. It is therefore surprising that career guidance is such a low priority in higher education. Effective appraisal and mentoring schemes could benefit institutions. At the same time the sector, individuals and HEIs could benefit from mobility and ideas and practices being disseminated.

4: Concluding comments

The rich diversity of higher education discourages generalisations about staffing in the sector. Nevertheless this study has highlighted some of the perceived benefits of working in higher education, and policies that promote the recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff. This report also draws attention to the limitations put upon individuals' careers largely through poor equality of opportunity practices in HEIs. Those staff especially affected have worked part-time and/or for long periods on short fixed term contracts – styles of working that tend to exclude them, for example, in criteria for promotion.

It is perhaps disappointing that even now there are few appraisal, mentoring or career guidance schemes perceived as helpful, or even available in higher education. However this is hardly surprising since higher education cultures emphasise individualism and few expect their managers to have management training.

The major drive to promote research in universities and the concomitant funding priorities have resulted in staffing policies that undermine the importance of teaching.

Overall this study demonstrates that teaching, and therefore students' educational experiences, are undervalued by the dominance of research and administration in our very competitive higher education culture. Unless teaching is sufficiently valued, students will be seen as interrupting the smooth progress of an institution. Where student progress is perceived as the main reason for higher education, administration supports their development and research enriches the culture.

The findings from this study suggests that to recruit, retain and promote the best staff in higher education, it is time to restore the balance, a view endorsed by the new chief executive of HEFCE:

> *University research is central to the knowledge-based economy. But so are other essential activities: teaching and learning, knowledge transfer, the broader contributions that all of higher education makes to civil society in our communities and regions. Research, still less the RAE, should not be allowed to distort behaviour and divert the sector from sustaining an overall balance of excellence across the range of activities that constitute higher education today.... We need to incentivise excellence and reward performance in areas other than basic and strategic research so that the RAE will not be the exclusive focus of rewarding quality.*
>
> Sir Howard Newby, *Guardian Education* 13 November 2001

List of abbreviations

HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
SCRE	Scottish Council for Research in Education
HEI	Higher education institution
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
HR	Human resources
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
IIP	Investors in People
FTC	Fixed-term contract
ILT	Institute for Learning and Teaching
CPD	Continuing professional development

Appointment, retention and promotion of academic staff in higher education institutions

Appendix 1: Methodology

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Amplified research questions

Research question 1: What are the issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion?

What are significant factors outwith control of institutions eg labour market, HEI location, Equal Opportunities, employment legislation? What are issues emerging from within institutions, eg equal opportunities policies and practices; coherence/flexibility of staffing practices across the HEI, discipline and cross disciplinary programmes; individual HEI statutes? Have the minimum levels of required qualifications for academic posts become inflated and detrimental to intellectual excitement? What is already known from previous studies, eg about those moving within the HE sector and those leaving the sector; about recruitment and retention in different regions and in various disciplines? What are the key pay and non-pay issues which influence staff behaviour?

Research question 2: How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?

What processes contribute to a positive ethos towards staffing: e.g. approaches to recruitment and appointments reflecting equal opportunities policies; conditions of service; nature and length of contracts for various academic staff; salaries and other rewards; expected balance between teaching, research and administration; access to staff development programmes and sabbaticals, career guidance; working conditions and facilities? How have HEIs responded to staff expectations and aspirations? What human resources policies are in place, how effectively are they implemented and how are they monitored and evaluated?

Research question 3: What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?

Is staff progression linked to standards? Can evidence from HEIs demonstrate any correlations between QAA, RAE and student attainment with staff progression? Are the following assumptions justified: good practice in staffing will result in enhanced ratings in RAE; good practice in staffing will reduce the costs incurred by wastage rates and staff turnover? What are the effects of external quality assurance and assessment activities on the motivation and balance of academics' work and on human resource approaches generally? Does the profile and composition of staff have an impact, eg proportion of short term contract staff or hourly-paid staff and the implications for quality? What do academic staff count as 'progression'? Does lack of perceived progression have negative effects?

Research question 4: What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?

What variables are associated with concepts of 'career' and 'promotion' – length of service, academic discipline and specialisation, gender, ethnicity, institutional role? How do HEIs encourage movement between teaching, administration, research and management? Do transition mechanisms including redeployment and retraining exist? How much flexibility is possible and are there irrevocable decisions? What are the medium and long-term effects of modularised and cross-discipline programmes on staff career opportunities? How do equal opportunities policies operate in promoting/inhibiting career development? How can career development be enhanced where different assumptions pertain about wastage and retention, eg for contract researchers and hourly-paid staff compared with senior management?

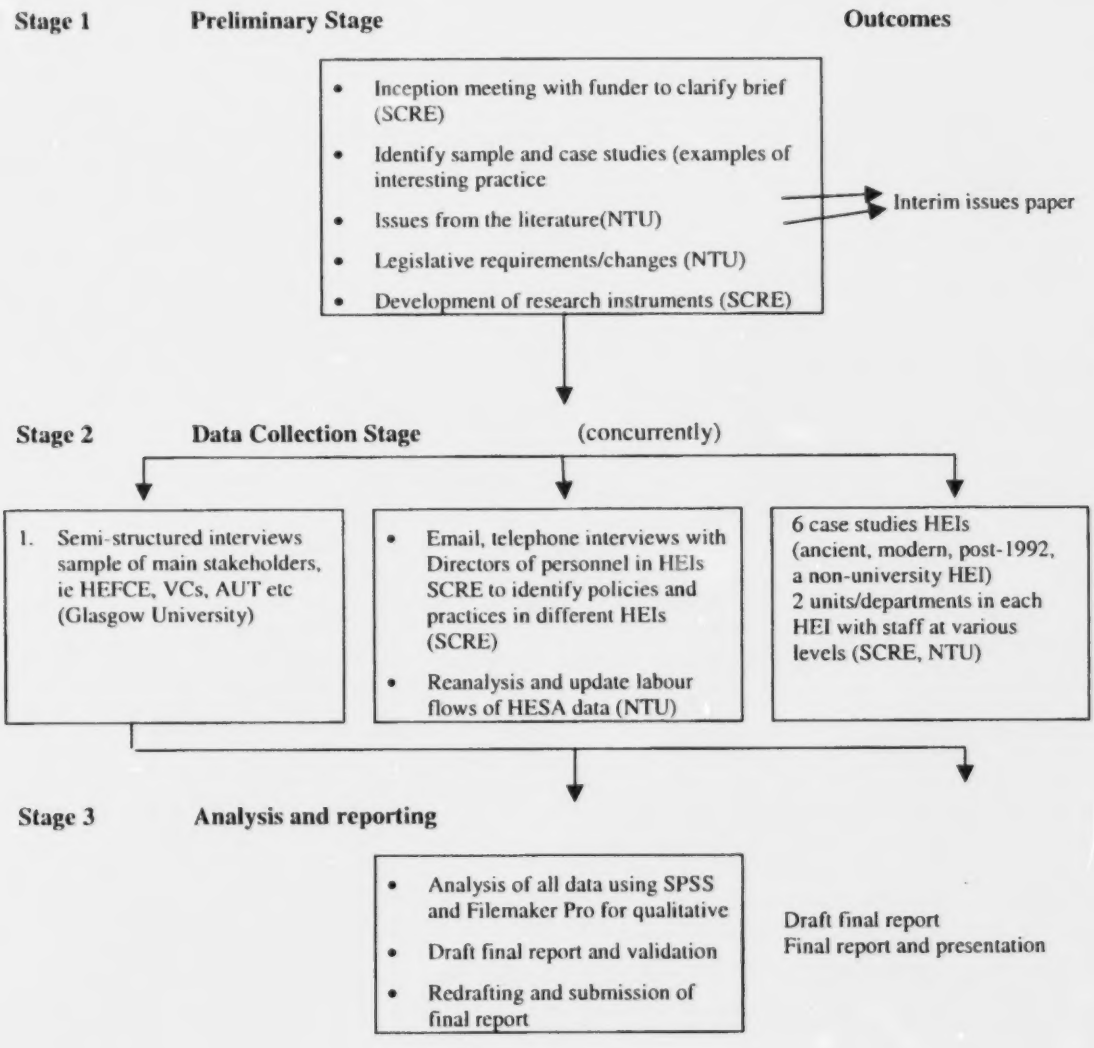
Research question 5: What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?

What HEI initiatives have been successful/productive in relation to this question? How has the loss of established tenure been offset by good staff practices? How can the issue of individual versus institutional benefits be best resolved to a win:win situation?

Research question 6: How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?
What does it mean to be an 'academic' in the modern world? How will strategies to build the capacity of HE staff deal with the demographic 'time-bomb'? What recommendations emerge from stakeholders – including those in HEIs, UUK, ILT, the unions and professional associations – to develop the national capacity of HE staff. What can HE learn from other sectors?

Research question 7: What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?
Will the benefits of building national capacity be offset by high turnover costs for individual HEIs, especially those who have invested heavily in staff development? What staff development strategies and initiatives are best centralised and which are more appropriately dealt with at a local HEI level?

Design overview


Stage 1
Preliminary Stage
Outcomes
Inception meeting with funder to clarify brief (SCRE)
Identify sample and case studies (examples of interesting practice
Issues from the literature(NTU)
Legislative requirements/changes (NTU)
Development of research instruments (SCRE)
Interim issues paper
Stage 2
Data Collection Stage
(concurrently)
1. Semi-structured interviews sample of main stakeholders, ie HEFCE, VCs, AUT etc (Glasgow University)
Email, telephone interviews with Directors of personnel in HEIs SCRE to identify policies and practices in different HEIs (SCRE)
Reanalysis and update labour flows of HESA data (NTU)
6 case studies HEIs (ancient, modern, post-1992, a non-university HEI)
2 units/departments in each HEI with staff at various levels (SCRE, NTU)
Stage 3
Analysis and reporting
Analysis of all data using SPSS and Filemaker Pro for qualitative
Draft final report and validation
Redrafting and submission of final report
Draft final report
Final report and presentation

Stakeholders: semi-structured interview schedule

1. What are the main issues that affect the recruitment of academic staff?
Probe: Significant external significant factors outwith the control of institutions eg labour market, HEI location, Equal Opportunities contractual legislation?
What are issues emerging from within institutions, eg Equal opportunities policies and practices; coherence/flexibility of staffing practices across the HEI, discipline and cross disciplinary programmes; individual HEI statutes?
Have the minimum levels of required qualifications for academic posts become inflated and detrimental to intellectual excitement?
What is already known from previous studies, eg about those moving within the HE sector and those leaving the sector; about recruitment in different regions and in various disciplines?

2. What are the main issues that affect academic staff retention?
Probe: Significant external significant factors outwith the control of institutions eg labour market, HEI location, Equal Opportunities contractual legislation?
What are issues emerging from within institutions, eg Equal opportunities policies and practices; coherence/flexibility of staffing practices across the HEI, discipline and cross disciplinary programmes; individual HEI statutes?
What is already known from previous studies, eg about those moving within the HE sector and those leaving the sector; about retention in different regions and in various disciplines?
Impact of forthcoming European Directive?

3. What are the main issues that affect the promotion of academic staff
Probe: Significant external significant factors outwith the control of institutions eg labour market, HEI location, Equal Opportunities contractual legislation?
What are issues emerging from within institutions, eg Equal opportunities policies and practices; coherence/flexibility of staffing practices across the HEI, discipline and cross disciplinary programmes; individual HEI statutes?
Have the minimum levels of required qualifications for promotion within academic posts become inflated and detrimental to intellectual excitement?
What is already known from previous studies, eg about those moving within the HE sector and those leaving the sector; about promotion in different regions and in various disciplines?

4. How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment of academic staff?
Probe: What processes contribute to a positive ethos towards staffing:
eg approaches to recruitment and appointments reflecting equal opportunities policies;
Advertising policy – how wide? Issue concerning internal/externally advertised posts?
the process itself – get opinions on how this works from inception to appointment.

5. How do HEIs encourage effective retention of academic staff?
Probe: conditions of service; nature and length of contracts for various academic staff;
salaries and other rewards;
expected balance between teaching, research and administration;
access to staff development programmes and sabbaticals, career guidance;
working conditions and facilities?
What human resources policies are in place, how effectively are they implemented and how monitored and evaluated?

6. How do HEIs encourage effective promotion of academic staff?
Who are the gatekeepers of promotion?
Probe: Examples of good practice.

7. What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?
Probe: Can evidence from HEIs demonstrate any correlations between QAA and RAE activities and student attainment?
Are the following assumptions justified: good practice in staffing will result in enhanced ratings in RAE;
good practice in staffing will reduce the costs incurred by wastage rates and staff turnover?
What are the effects of external quality assurance and assessment activities on the motivation and balance of academics' work and on human resource approaches generally?
Does the proportion of short term contract staff correlate with students' attainment?
What do academic staff count as 'progression'?
Do academics who get promoted do less teaching? If so, is this desirable?
Is there a culture of 1st and/or 2nd years being taught by PGs and other hourly-paid and, if so, what impact has this had on standards?

8. What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?
Probe; What variables are associated with concepts of 'career' and 'promotion' – length of service, academic discipline and specialisation, gender, ethnicity, institutional role?
How do HEIs encourage movement between teaching, administration, research and management?
How much flexibility is possible and are there irrevocable decisions?
What are the medium and long term effects of modularised and cross-discipline programmes on staff career opportunities?
How do equal opportunities policies operate in promoting/inhibiting career development?
How can career development be enhanced where different assumptions pertain about wastage and retention, eg for contract researchers and hourly-paid staff compared with senior management?
Questions about secondment – a career boost or bad move?
Ask about the role of Staff Development Offices within HEIs?

9. What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?
Probe for examples
What HEI initiatives have been successful in relation to this question?
How has the loss of established tenure been offset by good staff practices?
How can the issue of individual vs institutional benefits be best resolved to a win:win situation?

10. How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?
What does it mean to be an 'academic' in the modern world?
How will strategies to build the capacity of HE staff deal with the demographic 'time-bomb'?
What can HE learn from other sectors?

11. What recommendations would your organisation make to develop the national capacity of HE staff?

12. What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?
Will the benefits of building national capacity be offset by high turnover costs for individual HEIs, especially those who have invested heavily in staff development?
What staff development strategies and initiatives are best centralised and which are more appropriately dealt with at a local HEI level?
Could there be costs associated with not doing something?

13. Any further comments?

E-mail survey structured questionnaire

The appointment, retention and promotion of academic staff within higher education institutions

The Scottish Council for Research in Education (SCRE) is carrying out a survey of all Heads of Personnel of Higher Education Institutions in England This work, commissioned by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), aims to identify factors associated with the appointment, retention and promotion of any staff who teach, including research staff, those on fixed-term contracts,and hourly paid staff. At the end of this survey we have listed the main research questions being addressed by the project.
Further information about the project is available on the SCRE website.

The views of Heads of Personnel or Human Resources and particularly those with responsibility for policy development in relation to teaching staff will make a special contribution to the outcomes of the study.

The information supplied in response to this form is confidential and will be held on a computerised database (but will only be used within the project to analyse responses). The responses you give to this survey will only be available to the SCRE research team. Analysis of the survey findings will be passed to HEFCE and anonymity of individuals and institutions is guaranteed in any project report. We look forward to your participation in the survey.

[SCRE Standards of Practice for Research]

A DETAILS OF PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM
Name (surname first):

email address (required field, please type carefully):

Job title:

Name of institution:

Department/Unit:

B INSTITUTION STATISTICS
No of students (FTEs):

Full-time students:

Part-time students:

No of staff (FTEs):

What was your turnover rate of teaching staff expressed as a percentage of all teaching staff in 2000–2001?

Please identify any departments or subjects which are experiencing:
i.higher than average turnover of staff:
ii.problems in recruiting staff:

How many staff employed are less than 0.25FTE?

C POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
1. In your institution, do you have the following human resources policies, procedures and/or codes of practice in place for staff who teach? (Please tick as many as appropriate)

	Applicable to:		
	Permanent	Part-time /fixed contract	Hourly paid
Annual Review of Teaching Staff	—	—	—
Career Guidance	—	—	—
CPD Programmes	—	—	—
Disability	—	—	—
Equal Opportunities	—	—	—
Equal Pay	—	—	—
Harassment	—	—	—
Investors in People (IIP)	—	—	—
Induction	—	—	—
Leave of Absence/Study Leave	—	—	—
Mentoring	—	—	—
Probation	—	—	—
Promotion of Teaching Staff	—	—	—
Recruitment and Selection	—	—	—
Redundancy	—	—	—
Sabbaticals	—	—	—
Staff Appraisal	—	—	—
Staff Development	—	—	—
Staff Handbook	—	—	—

Additional comments:

C RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT
2.In your institution, what policies and practices support the **recruitment** of high quality academic staff who teach?

3.In your institution,what inhibits the recruitment of high quality academic staff who teach?

4.Please describe any particular initiative in your institution which has supported the recruitment and appointment of staff who teach:

C RETENTION

5a.Do you have the following measures in place to encourage staff retention? (please tick as many as appropriate)

__ Continuing Professional Development
__ Equal Opportunities Strategies/Action Plans
__ Fast Track Promotion
__ Leave of Absence/Study Leave
__ Mentoring
__ Performance Related Pay
__ Performance Review
__ Positive Institutional Ethos
__ Redeployment
__ Regrading
__ Retraining
__ Secondments
__ Staff Appraisal
__ Staff Development Opportunities
__ Supportive Management Structure

Others: (please specify below as many as you wish)

5b.Please describe any particular initiative in your institution which has supported the retention of staff who teach:

6.What factors inhibit the retention and development of staff who teach?

7.With regard in particular to part-time teaching staff, hourly paid staff and those on fixed-term contracts, are there any particular initiatives in place to retain their services?

C PROMOTION

8.In your institution, what policies and practices support **promotion** the of high quality academic staff who teach?

9.In your institution, what inhibits the promotion of high quality academic staff who teach?

10.Please describe any particular initiative in your institution with regard to promoting staff who teach.

11.Are there institutional or departmental policies related to promotion of fixed-term and/or hourly paid staff? |Yes |No |

12.Do you have published criteria for promotion of permanent teaching staff? |Yes |No |

13.In practice,how flexible are the promotions criteria? |Flexible |Somewhat |Fixed |

14.How universally are these criteria applied across all departments/units? |All |Most |Some |

C REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

15.When were the last policy reviews undertaken in relation to teaching staff?

	Within Last 2 Years	Currently Under Review
Equal Opportunities	o	o
Promotion of Teaching Staff	o	o
Recruitment and Selection	o	o
Staff Appraisal	o	o
Staff Development	o	o

16. Is there any annual audit of teaching staff? |Yes |No |

17. Please indicate whether Human Resources policies in your institution reflect awareness and implementation of the following legislative changes: (please tick as many as appropriate)

	Aware	Implementing
Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)	—	—
SEN Disability Discrimination Act (2001)	—	—
Human Rights Act (1998)	—	—
EU Directives on Part-time Working (2000)	—	—
Fixed Term Working (2002)	—	—

C YOUR OWN VIEWS

18. Generally, what three factors would you suggest to improve the appointment, retention and promotion of academic staff?

D RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Below are the main research questions which will inform the responses above. If you would like to comment or add anything else, please do so in the box provided:

- What are the issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion?
- How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?
- What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?
- What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?
- What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?
- How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?
- What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?

Comments:

If it is difficult for you to print your form and you would like a record of your submission, please indicate here: __

A copy of your responses will be e-mailed to you at the address you have given above.

[Click Here to Send Completed Form]

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

Case study interview schedules – Management perspective

The depth of this interview will depend on the degree of responsibility and discretion that the HoD has – particularly to vary HEI policy

A profile of the unit

Try to briefly confirm and supplement info we have from secondary sources
mission and progress towards that mission
check numbers and structure (estimates OK)
prevalence of fixed-term/casual
demographics –therefore possible problems/gaps in future
General HR Approach
Is there a HR strategy at this level – is it your responsibility?
How are roles determined/job design/job descriptions?
Any succession planning/HRP?
How do vacancies arise- who decides that there is a vacant post (established posts?, temporary posts?)

Recruitment issues (NB may have to distinguish types and levels of post)

Who has responsibility? (devolved or central)?
Attracting the right pool (probe labour market, international, meeting desirable criteria)
Evaluate the recruitment process (how done)
How much flexibility (e.g. salary level)?
Any barriers (e.g. legal, practical) to obtaining 'best' candidate
Is EO addressed or create problem?
Problems (probe timescales, particular roles, areas, quality issues, salary levels)
Are problems monitored and addressed (how)?
Suggestions of how to improve ID good practice?

Retention issues

Staff motivation and commitment
Any detrimental/enhancing factors?
Rate of turnover – how many and who are leaving and where are they going? (probe for details/examples)
Is this monitored and explanations sought?

Is this problem (how replaceable) or good (bring in new blood)?
Are salaries an issue?
How do you meet staff aspirations (wide issues)?
ID good practice

Career progress and promotion

Does career structure exist across the role in unit (describe)?
Do opportunities exist to actually use it?
How is this managed (appraisal, support etc) – how much discretion – who responsible?
Links to staff development/ do you 'invest' in this?
Any sense of performance mgt ?
How is quality enhanced/recognised?
What are the key criteria to be deemed suitable for progress/more responsibility?
Do you meet staff aspirations (career issues) – balance with unit needs?
Sideways moves / flexibility of role permitted
Barriers and problems (e.g. interdisciplinarity)
How much control/influence do managers (you) have – or subject to other factors?
ID Good practice

Case study interview schedules – Personal perspective

Introduction

Ensure interviewee knows about project (ensure they have leaflet –**in advance**) – key objectives of the interview.

Reassurance on complete confidentiality and anonymity (including to colleagues in own dept).

Indicate that interview record will be returned to interviewee for comment on fairness, accuracy and any omissions and for opportunity to add further comments.

Ensure that we have1 hour clear and uninterrupted to complete interview (for HoDs need 1.5 hours) and **reconfirm** that interview can be tape recorded – begin recording.

The person

Name; Unit; Grade; Gender; Ethnicity; Age-group; Nationality; How would they describe themselves (e.g. social scientist etc)

Career history and previous career development

NB we are less interested in an actual description here and more what these aspects fit into the issues under scrutiny

Qualifications (probe about importance of these to career so far)
Experience – non-HE Other HE This HEI
How have roles evolved/changed (a coherent career plan or pattern)
Experience of promotion in the past (career in non-academic roles)
What attracted you to academic career (and influenced your choice)?
What attracted you to this subject/path(and influenced your choice)?
Sense of orientation to work – professional? vocational? (why do they work and what do they look for from work)?

Present

NB Again the focus is how they view and interpret their own experience

Describe role (briefly)
Contractual basis (permanent, fixed-term, rolling etc/ part or full time)
What attracted you to this HEI and/or unit (probe on location, reputation, prospects, aspirations)
What attracted you to this post (as distinct from unit/HEI)?
Were there alternatives (other posts elsewhere etc)?
Why do you leave last post?
How were you recruited (probe on process – response to external advert/interview etc but also on approached by friend or at conference, even head hunted)?
(probe on competitiveness of process, sense of EO etc)
Do you know how this post arose (was it designed for you)?

Issues

Do you enjoy the job? (probe on content, variety, autonomy, status, level of responsibility)
Meeting your expectations/aspirations
Good relationships (staff, managers and students - culture)
Level of support (quality of infrastructure)
Workload levels/ stress
Work/home balance - flexibility
Do you think your contribution is recognised?
Teaching – where does it fit (importance to you etc. *probe* on this)?
Are you well rewarded/ desire more reward?
Terms and conditions OK
Do you feel secure/ desire more job security?
Do you feel included – e.g. part of the decision making process – made to feel welcome when you started?
Facilities OK?
Any other good features of working here/ changes that have improved things?
Do they enhance your commitment to staying?
What about bad features/ changes for the worse?

Career progress

Are there promotion/career opportunities here for you (do you fit into the career structure)?
Is the process (interviewee describe) fair and accessible?
What are the criteria for progressing here (e.g. star research)?
Is it possible to progress on the basis of good teaching?
Do you seek progress/promotion?
How would you assess your progress?
Have you ever felt discriminated against (systematic or individual basis)?
Who should take responsibility for your professional career (you?)?
Are you encouraged to develop (by whom)?
Is there an appraisal process that is helpful to you?
Is mentoring available (and helpful)?
Are there staff development opportunities and are you interested in making use of them? (broaden to ILT membership etc)
What is your long term career goal?
What are the barriers to achieving that (probe about networking, reputation)?
Does your future lie here?
If not, where do you want to work and in what type of role?
What are the key features that attract you to stay here or move elsewhere?
Have you actually started searching for other posts/roles – probe?
Are there any constraints to seeking/accepting an alternative post (probe on mobility, employability, maintaining dual careers in couples)?

Appendix 2: Background to the study

Background to the study

During the 1970's and 1980's there were few concerns about the ability of HEIs to recruit and retain academic staff. Indeed this was a period of very low turnover with little movement in overall numbers of staff (UGC, 1983). There appeared to be no need for human resource management for a profession with considerable autonomy in an era of financial certainty and security (Scott, 1984). Cuts in central government funding from 1981 led to a slight contraction over the next few years. Attempts to reduce the size of the academic workforce were made more difficult by low turnover. The number of staff employed as contract research staff was rapidly growing at that time (and subsequently since) and such staff were finding it increasingly difficult to find lecturing posts as the supply of these posts was outmatched by demand (Bryson, 1999).

One the more severe consequences of the contraction was that the opportunity for promotion and career advancement available in an expanding university system (Williams, 1974) was now curtailed. Over (1984) suggested that in order to overcome this it might to necessary to introduce 'anti-retention' policies such as restrictions on tenure in order to persuade senior staff to leave. In the event academic tenure was abolished in the 1988 Education Act.

HE was subject to profound change from this period onwards with the ending of the binary divide in 1992; the move from an elite to a mass system of HE; and a growing focus on standards and accountability. Thus contraction was reversed but it is notable that the model of expansion followed a very different pattern from the post-Robbins growth period.

Recruitment, retention and promotion have all come to the fore as problematic issues in the 1990's. This occurred against a background of an alleged deterioration in the attraction of the academic profession as a career or even a profession (Halsey, 1992). Academic salaries and status were perceived to have declined sharply in relative terms (Keep, Storey and Sisson, 1996). There was recognition that the age profile of academics in many disciplines was highly skewed to those close to retirement (Keep, Storey and Sisson, 1996) and the supply of able young staff who were willing to become academic staff was dwindling (Keep and Mayhew, 1995).

1. Major issues for the employment of academic staff

Higher education is characterised by sharp distinctions between subject disciplines, as a collection of 'small worlds, different worlds' (Clark, 1987). Thus academics tend to identify far more closely with their discipline than the organisation in which they work. This has created considerable diversity in the norms, practices, cultures and expectations of staff in both their daily work and careers. Thus many staff in the scientific disciplines serve an apprenticeship of PhD and several years in contract research before undertaking a lecturing role which will involve lab based teaching, and research in large teams. Conversely the educationalist or applied

social scientist may have considerable practitioner experience and employ different teaching approaches and research on their own. However, there is also diversity within disciplines and this is sharpened considerably by differences between the HEIs themselves. The ending of the binary divide has not yet had much effect on reducing the differences between HEIs in terms of mission, approach and culture. This is demonstrated by the tension between teaching and research.

Teaching and research

There has been a debate for many years about the nexus between teaching and research in HE. One view is that there is symbiotic relationship – good researchers make good teachers. Indeed many would argue that HE teaching is absolutely dependent on having a base of strong and active research in order to take students to the leading edge (Jenkins *at al*, 1998). Note the absence of an argument that good teachers make good researchers. There is also ambiguity about what constitutes research, is this the RAE variety or more general scholarship? Others dispute the integrationist view, suggesting that research and teaching compete for academic time or are fundamentally different activities requiring different skills (Barnett, 1992).

Evidence to support these views is rather contradictory and the debate remains unresolved. Nonetheless the importance of the point that many lecturers derive enormous intrinsic satisfaction from engaging in active research cannot be underestimated (Bryson and Barnes, 2000a). Thus there has been great opposition to the proposition of recreating a binary divide. Elton (1986) has suggested that the best way to mitigate this tension is give equal value to teaching, scholarship and research and a much greater differentiation in the role between different academics. However, this creates a problem as objective measurement of good teaching is much more problematic than assessing research quality (Coaldrake and Stedman, 1999). The latter is more amenable to evaluation by output and peer review whereas student evaluation is only a partial guide to teaching quality.

Quality assessment of teaching and subject review has caused considerable controversy since its introduction. It is moot whether this has the effect of enhancing the quality of teaching at the workface level. Certainly there are no incentives as in the RAE for doing so. Currently revised proposals are under consultation which would greatly reduce the tightness of external scrutiny at subject level and move the emphasis to an approach of institutional and internal audit.

There is a popular conception that academic staff are all lecturers or professors who all teach *and* research. However, the IRHEPC survey (1999) showed this to be misconceived. Of the 134,000 who had a teaching and/or research element in their contractual designation, 21% were employed on research grades and a further 20% were employed on hourly-paid teaching only contracts. This masks further complexity. Bryson and Barnes (2000a) found that more than half of administrative, librarian and information systems staff carried out direct teaching roles. Around half of the staff on research grades also taught. Despite this blurring of role demarcations, there was a contrasting trend, with a 'hard divide' developing between teaching only, teaching and research, and research only staff which was not readily identifiable by their contract designation. Many lecturers undertake teaching or research but not both roles. In addition to the large hourly-paid group there is a growing body of staff who are teaching only and have titles such as tutorial assistant or teaching fellow.

Contracts

The use of fixed-term contracts is very widespread among academic staff in the UK. Over 50% of staff in teaching and/or research roles are employed in this way (Bryson and Barnes, 2000b). Recent HESA statistics (1997-98) shows that 82% of academic new entrants were

appointed on fixed-term contracts with evidence that some HEIs had a policy of employing all new entrants on such contracts (Bryson, 2000).

> Retention might be perceived as less important for contracts where the employer appears to have identified a finite period for the continued need for the employee. However, for many staff, there is ongoing demand for their services and they are employed on a series of fixed-term contracts. Retention does become an issue when staff leave contracts early or become so disillusioned that they no longer wish to pursue an academic career (Bryson, 1999). Bryson (2001) found that 15% of contract research staff left contracts early to secure another post. Thus due to these and other reasons connected with the fixed-term contract employment system, the turnover of fixed-term staff (about 40%, Bryson, 2001) is at least four times greater than staff on permanent contracts.

Low turnover has been identified as a problem among older, more senior staff (IRHEPC, 1998) but high turnover has very significant economic and human resource costs (Staw, 1980). In addition to these issues, the most numerous group on fixed-term contracts are the contract research staff. For most academic disciplines, the labour market for lecturing posts draws almost exclusively on this group who are supposedly undergoing postdoctoral training.

Career development and redundancy

A group of staff who find it particularly difficult to progress their careers are hourly-paid teaching staff with the multiple disadvantage of being on temporary contracts, part-time and not part of any grading system or career structure. Although many such staff consist of postgraduate students and CRS, there would appear to be a considerable number of others who are trying to get a foothold into a more secure HE teaching career (Husbands and Davis, 2000).

There are some legislative developments which should have some considerable impact on human resource issues. The 1988 Education Act has already been referred to, which abolished tenure for new staff and those who had a change in contract. A recent survey indicated that 30% of teaching and research staff claimed to have tenure (Bryson and Barnes, 2000b). Since 1988 a very small number of academic staff on permanent contracts have been made compulsorily redundant. Staff in the pre-1992 universities are covered by statutes which detail a tight procedure in the event of redundancy to ensure academic freedom. This has led to complaints from senior management that such mechanisms inhibit their flexibility (Dearing, 1997).

Staff on fixed-term contracts have no such protection. They are entitled to redundancy consultation although most HEIs still require them to waive their rights to redundancy pay (Bryson, 1999). The UK is obliged to implement the EU Fixed-term Directive by July, 2002 at the latest, and consultations are currently taking place. This is likely to outlaw or severely limit the use of serial fixed-term contracts, offer parity of conditions with permanent staff and remove the redundancy waiver. Given current patterns of use in HE, this legislation should make fixed-term contracts much less attractive to employers.

Already on the statute book are the Part-time Regulations, introduced in 2000. This offers parity to part-time staff. In theory this should offer many hourly-paid staff the opportunity to transfer on to pro-rata contracts with a great improvement in pay, pensions and conditions of employment. Anecdotal evidence gathered by the authors would indicate there is little evidence of this happening yet. Indeed the converse is true with some hourly-paid staff failing to have their contracts renewed.

Equity

The other most relevant legislation is in the area of equal opportunities. Although much of the law is decades old, recent case law on 'equal pay for work of equal value' has thrown doubt on the validity of grading and pay levels between different groups of HE staff. For such pay differences between jobs to be legal they must be justifiable through the equivalent of a system of analytical job evaluation. Interconnected to the issue of insecure contracts are equal opportunities issues. HEIs have been criticised for having a poor record on appointing and promoting women (IRHEPC, 1998; Court, 1999) and ethnic minorities (Carter *et al*, 1999). Discrimination is widespread (Goode, 2000) despite the importance of a global labour market in HE. As a much higher proportion of women and minorities are employed on fixed-term contracts there would appear to some evidence that they are 'ghettoised' and find it difficult to progress onto permanent posts (Bryson, 1997). The recent Race Relation's Amendment Act 2000 strengthens and extends the scope of the 1976 Race Relations Act. All HEIs must now have a general duty to eliminate racial discrimination and will, for example, be required specifically to monitor the recruitment and progress of ethnic minority staff.

2. Studies on recruitment, retention and promotion

The first large-scale project to examine recruitment and retention was undertaken by IMS on behalf of the CVCP and the AUT (Pearson *et al*, 1990). They noted that there had been no increase in numbers of permanent staff but a 30% increase in contract researchers over the previous five years. Their survey of departments showed that the only area where there was a major recruitment difficulty was engineering and technology. The response to recruitment difficulties was to readvertise and, to a lesser extent, to raise the salary level.

Staffing and human resource issues were not dealt with in-depth by the Dearing Report (1997). However, as part of the evidence a staff survey was conducted which gave some indication of potential problems. As a consequence and as part of its remit to examine pay and conditions, the Bett Committee commissioned a thorough study of recruitment and retention (IRHEPC, 1998). A follow up survey on a similar basis was also conducted the following year by the Office of Manpower Economics (CVCP, 2000). At the same time a study involving a more in depth analysis of a sample of HEIs was carried out by Industrial Relations Services (CVCP, 2000).

A survey on appointment and promotion was conducted by the AUT (Court, 1999) of a sample of its membership (mainly teaching and research staff in pre-1992 universities). In addition there have also been studies which have focussed on particular disciplines. The EPSRC (1999) examined IT and Computer Science. Staffing difficulties within clinical medicine have been identified since 1995 (HMSO, 1995) which led to the undertaking of the Richards Report (AMS, 2000).

This evidence may be summarised as follows.

Recruitment

The Bett survey concluded that recruitment problems were not widespread but were confined to certain sub-groups and localities (IRHEPC, 1999: E3).

> *Academics in business subjects, information technology, electronic engineering, and some rarer specialisms; in recruitment of academics with professional experience (e.g. in law, health studies and teaching).*

Recruitment problems were sharpest in the pre-1992 universities; the South-East (excluding London) and the West Midlands. In terms of the issues giving rise to problems the most commonly cited were:

- Less competitive salaries
- Area problems (e.g. rural, expensive, few job opportunities for partner)
- Job insecurity from fixed-term contracts
- Poor promotion possibilities.

The OME survey (CVCP, 2000) had similar findings in terms of the disciplines experiencing difficulties and found that difficulties had increased since the previous year. Furthermore there were particular difficulties in recruiting senior academic staff and researchers in a wider range of disciplines. Some HEIs reported that there were insufficient qualified candidates applying for posts.

The IRS study (CVCP, 2000) also supported these findings and analysed the labour market situation:

- Supply factors – a shortage of staff with appropriate skills and qualifications in certain specialisms and a shortage of candidates in areas where external (to HE) experience was important
- Demand factors – HEIs now sought candidates with a combination of skills; new posts required a mix of academic and professional expertise, and senior posts required academic *and* management skills.

Thus suitable applicants were hard to attract given very poor starting salaries at junior and senior levels and slow pay progression. The study compared salaries with comparators in the private sector (engineering and computing) and teaching and professions allied to medicine and concluded that experienced staff in these areas were very unlikely to move into academia.

The EPSRC (1999) study on IT and computing posts found that there was a major problem in attracting strong British candidates to PhDs, research posts and permanent posts. Retention of permanent staff was not so much of an issue with most movements being to other HEI posts but PhD students were not moving on to academic careers and researchers were discouraged by lack of career opportunities and job insecurity. In short 'there was an insufficient flow of high calibre people'.

> The Richards Report found that that there was an inability to attract suitably experienced candidates to senior academic vacancies in clinical medicine, particularly chairs. Another study found that the problems had spread to all levels of clinical posts and that the root causes were:

1. The lack of a career structure.
2. Insufficient flexibility in combining clinical and research training.
3. Prolonged insecurity due to short term contracts in the training phase (AMS, 2000).

The BMA reported recently that one quarter of chairs and 300 lecturer post vacancies remain unfilled (THES, 8/6/2001).

Despite the large number of potential candidates in the labour market for CRS jobs, recent surveys have indicated that some posts are proving difficult to fill (SBS, 2000), particularly within certain disciplines (IRHEPC 1998). A recent report into academic career choices after postgraduate training identified many academic researchers had become:

> *Increasingly disillusioned with academic research and that their move to industry had provided them with a career structure, greater job security and a substantially larger salary.*
>
> (Wellcome Trust 2000).

Thus the inability to retain stronger researchers creates recruitment difficulties to attract the high quality applicants to other academic posts.

Retention

The Dearing staff survey indicated that over a quarter of staff stated that they were unlikely to remain in the academic profession until retirement. Younger staff expressed this intention much more frequently. The most common reasons cited were job insecurity (by those on fixed-term contracts), too much stress (by lecturers, particularly those in post-1992 universities) and too much administration (professors). The second most common reason for all groups was poor pay. Older staff complained of deprofessionalisation, poor morale and lack of resources.

The Bett study found retention problems in the same disciplines as there were recruitment difficulties. In addition there were problems in retention of researchers and of academics on fixed-term contracts more generally.

The OME survey had similar findings but also found problems in the psychology and nursing disciplines. More ominous was the finding that retention problems were increasing with younger staff. The respondents cited the following issues as giving rise to problems:

- Pay related – uncompetitive salaries, low London allowance, rigidities of the national pay scale, inferior benefits
- Area problems (such as cost of living in London)
- Insecure contracts
- RAE related pressures
- Increasing academic workload
- Inter-HEI competition.

The IRS survey (CVCP, 2000) found a diverse picture with some departments having too low a turnover. However, they found similar areas having problems in retaining staff to the OME survey. They identified two main causes; the RAE gave rise to head hunting and poaching; and promotion barriers.

In studies of job satisfaction of academics pay has been given prominence as a major cause of dissatisfaction (Oshagbemi, 1996). This contrasts with the WiHE findings of Bryson and Barnes (2000a) where pay was found to be fairly neutral in terms of satisfaction although many academics felt undervalued in terms of their contribution being recognised. Arguably those staff who valued pay highly would not have entered the profession or would have left when relative pay declined many years before. In the WiHE survey respondents gave much more importance to issues such as workload, autonomy and security than pay.

Respondents to the EPSRC (1998) survey cited the lack of security inherent in short-term academic contracts and the need for continual application for funding, alongside issues of salary and career prospects as primary reasons for leaving academic research posts. Bryson (2001) found that the lack of available posts for experienced staff to apply for at the end of fixed-term contracts was a serious practical barrier to retention.

Promotion and career advancement

The primary criterion for progression that has been identified by studies is research expertise (Dearing, 1997; IRHEPC, 1998; Court, 1999). Teaching appears to come a poor third behind

administration. In the pre-1992 universities, contribution to the RAE seems to be given priority.

The Dearing Report noted that pre-1992 universities had responded to modest pay awards for staff by increasing the numbers of promoted posts, frequently to levels of between 50-60% at senior lecturer grade or above whereas only 25% of staff in post-1992 universities were promoted to these grades. The Report suggested that the link between promoted posts and monitoring and reward for promotion was insufficient in most HEIs.

The AUT study showed that research criteria were predominant in selection decisions and normal appointment procedures had been circumvented in the appointment of 'RAE stars'. There was a lack of staff confidence in promotion systems, teaching was the least influential factor and research the most important (particularly RAE research) and that was a lack of equal opportunities (Court, 1999).

The IRS survey (CVCP, 2000) discussed the issue of 'bunching' at the top of the scales below the senior grades of principal lecturer (post 92 HEIs) and senior lecturer (pre-1992 universities). They concluded that this created dissatisfaction because of the inability to improve pay for the individual.

Bryson and Barnes (2000a) found that although 41% of teaching and research staff were in senior posts, only just over half of them had been promoted to these posts with the rest being direct entrants. Their survey noted that only half as many women as men were in senior posts and men on average required less service to get promoted 66% of women had to complete ten or more years service to get promoted whereas 52% of men had achieved promotion before this. In the same survey, 35% of staff were dissatisfied about their career progress. However, promotion was not perceived to be a vehicle to gain greater pay but as a recognition of contribution, status and reputation. The main barriers to progress were given as lack of promotion opportunities, insecure contracts, lack of personal mobility, unfair promotion procedures and discrimination. Most respondents cited a lack of adequate infrastructure in their HEI to allow them to pursue a career.

3. HEI policies and procedures

All HEIs have procedures in place for these matters although promotion criteria/procedures for research grades are underdeveloped (Bryson, 1999) and procedures for hourly-paid teaching staff virtually absent (Husbands and Davis, 2000).

New entrants gain posts on the basis of qualifications and experience. In pre-1992 universities, having a PhD is almost universally essential to get a lectureship in any discipline and a research post in the sciences. Bisset *et al* (2001) found that HEIs used a much narrower range of selection tools than other organisations with the main criterion being the possession of publications in suitable journals. In post-1992 universities, suitable professional experience may substitute for a research record but having a higher degree is important. Teaching qualifications appear to be fairly irrelevant.

> Teaching and research staff in pre-1992 universities are subject to a formal system of developmental probation. Successful completion is determined by assessment by senior colleagues and not linked to external quality measures. There is some evidence that staff who are not deemed to be successful researchers are failing probation. The Dearing recommendation, that attaining membership status with the Institute for Learning and Teaching should be a prerequisite of professional academic status, has no evidence to support that this is occurring in practice or that

membership of the ILT is formally recognised as an attribute for career progress.

Monitoring of policies in terms of effectiveness is generally lacking as are many aspects of sophisticated human resource management in HEIs (Keep, Storey and Sisson, 1996). The response to the inability to recruit in 1990 (Pearson *et al*) was to readvertise or to offer a higher starting salary. Little seems to have changed according to more recent surveys (CVCP, 2000). Recruiting on a higher salary is not without problems as the employee will be fairly rapidly pressing for promotion and there are problems of equity with other colleagues (HMSO, 1997).

In the IRS study (CVCP, 2000) heads of department sought more flexibility to offer market supplements and relax the grading restriction and adherence to the national scales. Thus in some HEIs individuals had been appointed on individual contracts above the scales and attracting performance related pay. There are clear equal opportunities difficulties which may arise in these circumstances in a sector which has a poor reputation in this area (Goode, 2000). Another strategy was to offer a 'whole package' to senior staff which included access to good research facilities and relief from administrative and teaching 'burdens'.

The IRS study identified some other approaches to counter problems (CVCP, 2000). They cited the policy of 'growing their own' where the most able CRS, PhDs and even undergraduates were nurtured and encouraged to stay. Recruitment measures also took the form of advertising in an increasing range of media and 'head-hunting' either through informal networks or the use of specialists. Retention measures included offering enhanced pay by: responsibility allowances and discretionary pay; staff development; and opportunities to undertake consultancy.

Promotion procedures have also been subject to criticism rather than commended for effectiveness (Court, 1999). This criticism has frequently been on equal opportunities grounds (Heward and Taylor, 1993; Carter *et al*, 1999).

> There are some examples of particular positive local initiatives. For example the universities of Warwick and Leeds (among a small number of others) created a substantial number of research fellowships in 1995 on the basis of a five year initial contract leading to a permanent teaching and research appointment. They received applications from a very wide and strong field of candidates (HMSO, 1995).

Overall it is difficult to identify broad strategies by HEIs to address staff concerns about the deterioration in the academic profession as an attractive and sustainable career. Bryson and Barnes (2000a) found that the most dissatisfied of all staff groups were lecturing staff who had failed to gain the promotions they thought were their due and now felt their careers were stagnant; most of these staff were in their fifties. There would also appear to be a gap between procedures and policies and practice on the ground. For those on fixed-term contracts as a whole, implementation of effective policies, such as they exist, seems to have been particularly weak (Bryson and Barnes, 2000b).

Thus it is often left up to the individual to manage their own career. There is a tradition in the academic profession as in other professions that career development is a matter for the individual and not the employer. Voluntary changes between roles such as researcher, teacher and administrator seem to be solely on the initiative of the individual although for fixed-term staff these may be pragmatic choices in order to gain a more secure contract (Bryson and Tulle-Winton, 1994). Given the sharpness of focus of selection criteria on the possession of appropriate publications in the field and 'fitness' for the RAE such role changes are difficult.

Some staff are subject to involuntary changes of role. There is evidence this is a consequence of their being deemed research inactive and therefore moved to teaching only or administrative roles. Many of these staff were very unhappy about this (Bryson and Barnes, 2000a). Such changes may also occur when staff are redeployed if their post becomes redundant.

4. Overview

All the evidence points to increasing problems in the areas of recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff. The neglect of the role of teaching despite its core importance in the quality of higher education has created distortions which will be difficult to remedy. It may be inadequate to assume that by supporting strong researchers, and to a lesser extent those who wish to take management roles, that teaching quality will also be enhanced. Policy initiatives have had a mixed effect. Those policies designed to support teaching have been overshadowed and undermined by policies which have the opposite effect. Other trends in HE, such as the comparative erosion of salaries and conditions, the rise of insecure employment and the lack of penetration of equality of opportunity have made the occupation rather less attractive. In some areas where there are few alternative career opportunities this has had less of a direct impact, but can hardly encourage the motivation and productivity of staff. A key feature of HE is diversity and there is some danger that offering general prescriptions may benefit some areas but create further problems in others. Given this context the study reported here aimed to uncover and scrutinise what is happening on the ground at a level that reflects this diversity.

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Appendix 3: Views of stakeholders

Views of stakeholders

Part of our research consisted of a series of interviews with key stakeholders in the sector. A full list of organisations consulted in this part of the research is listed at the end of this appendix.

A list of stakeholders to be consulted and an interview schedule was drawn up in consultation with HEFCE. Stakeholder organisations were approached via their CEO or equivalent, invited to take part in the research, and to nominate a suitable representative to participate in the interviews. Thus what is reported here are the *perceptions* of representatives of key stakeholder organisations.

A mixture of personal and telephone interviews was used. The interviews were semi-structured. In interviews with stakeholders with a direct interest in teaching quality, a fixed set of questions were covered in all cases, with a varying amount of follow-up questions being asked according to the interviewee's expertise. In the case of organisations with a broadly Equal Opportunities perspective from outside of the sector (CRE, DRC, EOC) interviewees were asked to provide an overview of the sector and then asked more specific questions. Interviewees were asked to speak on behalf of their organisations and we refer to organisations rather than individual interviewees here. All interviews were taped and all participants were sent an annotated version of the interview for verification purposes. They were also invited to add anything further at this point, which some did.

Here we report responses under the headings of the main questions which were asked. However, we wish to emphasise that many of the responses should be seen as overlapping, rather than discrete.

1. ***What are the main issues that affect the recruitment of academic staff?***

The overwhelming response here concerned *pay levels* compared to other professions. We were repeatedly told that academic salaries are currently not competitive. It was also often said that there are particular problems around recruitment in those subject areas where potential recruits at graduate or postgraduate level have an obvious competing sector where they can earn more without having to go through the process of getting a PhD which is now seen as a prerequisite for a lecturing post. Examples of such subjects included Law, Education, and Accountancy. All this is of little surprise as the decline in academic salaries and their comparative worth has been covered in a number of places and have been held to affect recruitment and retention (IRHEPC 1999, CVCP 2000, AUT 2001). There were varying opinions about how this should be remedied, with some recommending that universities be allowed greater flexibility in what they can pay staff, although it was also recognised that there was currently greater flexibility in this area than was often realised. As the Bett Report noted:

> *As autonomous employers, HE institutions chose whether or not to adopt the nationally-negotiated arrangements for pay and conditions.*
>
> (IRHEPC 1999: para.41)

At the same time as pay levels had stagnated (while those in other sectors had boomed), it was said that *the conditions of academic life are becoming poorer.* This primarily concerned various types of accountability, most notably the RAE and, to a lesser extent, QAA reviews. It also included the administrative burdens which have been associated with widening participation and increased student numbers, a process taking place at the same time as students were becoming consumers and moving towards demanding consumer rights. Overall, academics face a wide - and widening - range of responsibilities. It was noted that workloads were tolerable as long as other rewards kept pace, but this had not been the case. This is important as the Bett Report noted that:

If pay is significantly below market rates, the intangible attractions of working in higher education will need to be correspondingly greater, or institutions will be unable to fill vacant posts or have to appoint generally poorer quality candidates than they would wish.

(IRHEPC 1999: para.166)

Indeed previous research has shown that increased workload has helped to lead to a situation where few academics now regard an academic career as an attractive option (Kinman 1998: 21). The AUT told us that there was also evidence that collegiality was breaking down (see also ibid: 20), while HESDA noted that the academic profession had been downgraded by both the public and the Government.

There was also some concern about the *supply of quality applicants*. Once again this was generally felt to be subject-specific with a feeling that the supply of quality applicants might be falling off in some disciplines. We note here that problems of recruiting postgraduates into particular subjects have also been covered elsewhere (IRHEPC 1999: paras.62, 167 and 170; Strategic Market Associates 1999). Potentially this could have an impact on teaching quality, and we were told that this was already happening. One way of coping with this in some disciplines was said to be *via* the recruitment of more international staff, although this was seen as offering only a short-term solution. More information about this may be gleaned following the completion of some research by HEFCE into whether some subjects are facing a worldwide shortage of quality applicants. However, the QAA pointed out that in terms of numbers of applicants, there did not seem to be an overall recruitment problem.

A number of organisations commented on a range of *outstanding Equal Opportunities issues*. We deal with this issue separately below, but would also like to comment here. The EOC said that Bett had spoken of "clear and substantial" evidence of unequal pay and noted that this issue and that of equal value had still to be fully addressed. They also commented that it was important to ensure that recruitment was based on clear job descriptions and person specifications. Recruitment practices should not be indirectly discriminatory. NATFHE claimed that there is still widespread indirect discrimination in the sector and that this was not being treated with any urgency. A previous report by AUT has said that the sector is 'rife with discrimination'. (AUT 1999: 1). The CRE said that performance indicators on racial equality were needed. This was part of a broader call for statistics which could indicate the health of the sector, as current HESA statistics were not able to do this.

Casualisation of the workforce was cited as a major issue by the trades unions, especially in a climate where job stability was being seen as increasingly important. The use of Fixed-term Contracts (FTCs), which provide only insecure employment and a tenuous career pattern, was condemned. The Bett Report had noted that:

Higher education offers a margin of fixed-term and casual employment which is far from secure.

(IRHEPC 1999: para.180)

NATFHE posed the question of whether the use of FTCs was a financial necessity or part of a deliberate HR strategy. UUK argued that pay was not the main motivator for academics; pursuing one's area of interest might be. This is obviously easier on a more secure contract.

Along with SCOP, NATFHE raised the key issue of *part-time staff*, which the Bett Report said were 33% of the total (IRHEPC 1999: para.212), although other estimates have put this higher. With such figures in mind, NATFHE emphasised that such staff could no longer be regarded as peripheral. Bett also noted that 38% of academic staff in post-1992 institutions were paid by the hour (ibid: para.213). A number of interviewees put forward the view that any initiatives to improve conditions for full-time staff should apply equally to part-time staff.

We would also note that, in line with Bett, interviewees often noted *that the sector is a complex one* where issues varied between and within both subjects and institutions. Subtleties within the system are important and, in this respect, simplistic solutions should be avoided.

2. ***What are the main issues that affect academic staff retention?***

The main issue cited here concerned *increasing pressure and bureaucracy/administration combined with deteriorating working conditions.* The RAE and QAA reviews were again cited as a particular concern here. However, it should be seen as part of broader pattern of being expected to perform at a high level across a range of responsibilities. Previous research has noted that:

There is powerful evidence that widespread changes in policy and practice have led to a significant increase in workload and job pressures for many British academic and academic-related staff.

(Kinman 1998: 5)

Here NATFHE noted that while academics were by no means unique in experiencing stress, many were close to the edge in terms of being able to cope with increased demands. A previous survey has reported high levels of stress and discomfort amongst academics and shown that over 40% of them report working over 48 hours (ibid: 2).

The issue of retention was also one which was seen as varying across subjects and HEIs, once again dependent on the amount of external competition within subjects.

A *possible need for evaluation of roles* and rewarding various areas of achievement

(not simply research) was cited, although Bett noted the difficulties that this poses (IRHEPC 1999: para.64). This is partly because of the diverse range of pay scales which operate across the sector, although this issue has begun to be addressed in the latest pay deal. SCOP argued that many new staff were interested in teaching in HE and saw this as the way to advance their career. In order to retain these people, HEIs would have to ensure that this was possible. It was also pointed out that sometimes promotions blockages can affect retention, especially as salaries are comparatively low.

There were also comments about *staff needing to be valued*. HESDA stated simply that people need to feel valued and that there are appropriate structures in place to reward good performance. For HEFCE the issue was related to the use of FTCs which could act as a barrier to retention. Conversely, permanent contracts could lead people to believe that they were valued and had a career. HEFCE also argued that the quality of the academic environment and infrastructure and the quality of academic colleagues were also key factors in retention. The BBSRC lamented a lack of clear career paths especially for post-doctoral staff coming to the end of a first or second contract, while NATFHE argued that higher pay and a permanent contract for all new staff across all disciplines was the solution to problems of retention

We would also note here that Bett suggested that there was no overall problem with regard to recruitment and retention (IRHEPC 1999: para.166) and that problems tended to be subject-specific (ibid: para.172). It also noted that the use of FTCs had led to recruitment and retention problems.

3. ***What are the main issues that affect the promotion of academic staff***

The main initial response to this question was a perception that *research capability is the main route for academics to get promoted*. This was even more the case if that capability led to the acquisition of external funding. This traditional route to promotion was held to dominate across the sector (and was again said to heavily skewed by the influence of the RAE). A number of respondents lamented this and said that there should be a greater diversity of routes into promotion which allowed individual performance to be judged.

In particular it was said that more emphasis should be placed on teaching in respect of promotion, especially in an era of lifelong learning and the rise of the student as consumer. There was a limited amount of evidence that in some cases teaching capability had led to promotion. The other route for promotion was held to be *via* successful links with the HEI's local community and in particular its business community. Again there was limited evidence that such links could lead to promotion, including personal chairs. UCEA believed that promotions issues were more urgent in the new sector which had expanded quickly with bouts of promotion, after which opportunities tended to be more limited. By contrast opportunities for promotion appeared to be more evenly spread in the older institutions.

The next issue to be raised around promotion was the *procedures* involved. There was a general consensus that promotions procedures should be transparent and open and that they should conform to good employment practice. The EOC also

noted that they should not be indirectly discriminatory. However, such good practices were not held to be widespread. Indeed, one respondent described promotions processes as "shrouded in secrecy". There were also calls for close monitoring of promotions procedures and, subsequently, action if problems were found. The CRE cited judicious use of target setting as one way forward.

This leads into the third factor: *continuing discrimination against women and ethnic minorities*. One respondent said that this was "widespread", while another spoke of a "glass ceiling for women". Indeed, as we were writing this report, the AUT published new data showing an increasing pay gap between men and women across the sector (AUT, press release 17 July 2001). Prior to this Bett had noted that: 'Within all staff groups proportionately fewer women than men are in the higher grades' (IRHEPC 1999: para.50). A report on racial equality had also noted that 'ethnic minorities... (are) more likely to be on fixed-term posts and less likely to be professors, regardless of length of service' (Carter *et al* 1999: 65). The link to procedures across these issues is that routine monitoring which might highlight problems is often not carried out.

Finally, HESDA and UUK called for *more flexibility within payments schemes and career structures*. HESDA pointed out that if discretionary salaries were seen as incentives at professorial level (and above), then there was no logical reason why this should not apply to all grades.

We would also add that the importance of promotions as an issue should not be underestimated. Previous research has suggested that 52% of academics feel that they are unlikely to get promotion (Kinman 1998: 10) and that lack of promotion prospects is also a cause of stress amongst academics (ibid: 3).

4. ***How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment of academic staff?***

Once again the main response concerned *having the correct policies and procedures*, ensuring that these were monitored and action taken if problems were found. HESDA noted that what was needed was an institutional strategy for good practice, while HEFCE called for proper data collection systems and target-setting.

Respondents drew particular attention to *the need to train all those involved in recruitment, especially with regard to Equal Opportunities and racial awareness*. This might only be possible if suitable training materials were developed and minimum standards laid down. HEFCE said that HEIs should follow CUCO guidelines and get themselves assessed by the new Equality Challenge Unit. SCOP and the CRE noted that the composition of university governing bodies was also an issue, especially as leadership from the top was essential to combat problem areas. In this respect, HEFCE noted there could be particular problems at more senior levels where the use of headhunters had the potential to lead to accusations that universities were recruiting in their own image.

When asked about *advertising policy*, interviewees said that this should be as wide as possible. Several cited the need to go beyond the *THES* and the Tuesday *Guardian* in order to recruit. This might include advertising in the specialist press, including newspapers aimed at ethnic minorities and other marginalised groups. The DRC cited *Disability Now* as somewhere it advertised, in addition to the

Wednesday *Guardian* which is widely read in the voluntary sector which incorporates large numbers of disabled people. Advertisements should also avoid sending out messages which are indirectly off-putting to some candidates by giving out the message that *"you are not one of us"*. For the CRE, countering this might include specifically welcoming applicants from within particular groups.

The third factor cited here was that *the job and person specification should be fair.* By this, interviewees meant that the person specification should relate to the job in question, rather than to pre-existing models of being "one of us". From a research council's perspective the ESRC said that while it was not its job to interfere in HEIs' employment practices, it could have a role in promoting examples of successful women and ethnic minorities.

NATFHE argued that the real recruitment problem *was short term contracts and low starting salaries* and the AUT said that academic jobs had to be made attractive to potential applicants and the jobs themselves had to ensure a fair balance between the expectations of individuals and the demands of the HEIs. Once again, we would note that the way in which this is skewed by subject and institution.

5. How do HEIs encourage effective retention of academic staff?

A range of responses were received here.

The most popular response concerned *better training for management*, so that academics became "managed" in a positive way. Again this was a key finding of Bett which commented on 'the low priority which seems to be given to people-management issues' (IRHEPC 1999: para.57). For our interviewees, better management included setting academics the right objectives, making sure that they know what is required of them and how they can achieve this, and ensuring that appraisal is meaningful. The QAA cited a need to learn from other (unspecified) sectors about training for management.

This was related to a second factor, that of *promoting staff development and training* more generally. For HESDA this would involve an annual review of academics' developmental needs, which might act as part of the promotions process. SCOP argued that proper staff development would also help academics in coping with the various demands placed upon them (eg via time management courses), although NATFHE suggested that reducing workload and bureaucracy would also aid retention. Once again we would note that Bett had also pointed to 'the relatively low priority apparently given to staff training and development in many institutions' (ibid: para.319) and its call for 'greater investment of time and resources in the training and development of *all* groups of staff' (ibid: para.320, emphasis in original).

This is also related to a more general point made about *making the academic job more attractive*. Interviewees cited several ways of doing this. It was pointed out that most academics are loyal to their subject area rather than to the particular HEI which employs them. Thus to stay within an HEI or academia more generally, academics have to believe that they can make progress within their subject area. This means achieving the right balance between individual expectation and

institutional demands. It also means providing support for academics such as supporting conference attendance and sabbaticals in order to enable academics to pursue areas of interest. Once again, NATFHE pressed us to note the particular importance of these issues to part-time staff.

For SCOP, CRE and ILTHE, retention was linked to promotions, in that if people felt that promotions procedures were fair and recognised a number of ways for people for people to progress (rather than simply via research) then they would stay. Similarly, UUK cited the ability to increase one's salary as an important part of retention.

This was again part of a more general desire to *offer incentives to stay*. For HEFCE this included offering competitive salaries and paying the best people more, although it was also noted that issues around the attractiveness of an academic career go beyond the issue of pay to incorporate the other issues cited above. For the trades unions incentives meant offering people permanent contracts, while CRE cited the need to *listen* to what staff were saying about issues such as racial equality and then act upon it. UCEA noted that if an HEI really wanted an individual to stay, then it would use whatever means it could to ensure this.

The DRC raised the issue *of retaining academic staff who have become disabled*. It noted that one of the distinguishing characteristic features of disability when compared to gender and race issues was that individuals can *become* disabled. Indeed becoming disabled is more common than being born disabled. It is also more likely to happen to older people. For the DRC the important thing was to ensure HEIs start from the assumption that newly disabled staff will be staying, not leaving. Then it became a matter of what the HEI had to do to meet the new needs of the individual.

6. How do HEIs encourage effective promotion of academic staff?

Responses here centred on *the need for good practice*. This should ensure that HEIs have open and transparent policies which are clear to all staff and work in practice as well as on paper. For UUK this was best achieved by having personnel professionals present during promotions procedures. It meant having an awareness amongst senior management about what best practice is, then operating best practice, monitoring its effects and acting if necessary to remedy any failings.

A vital part of this *was giving appropriate feedback to unsuccessful candidates*. This was especially important in relation to any staff development needs which might have been recognised during an unsuccessful promotions application. For AUT it also meant having an appeals system which gave a fair chance of appeals being successful. NATFHE cited the NHS as particularly good at providing information for unsuccessful promotions candidates, including the identification of any CPD needs. UUK and HEFCE recommended that HEIs follow CUCO guidelines on promotion.

There was again a call for *more flexibility in promotions* so that it is not, *de facto* if not *de jure*, reliant on research. Such flexibility needed to be made clear to all staff and NATFHE argued that staff need to feel that they genuinely have career choices. ILTHE cited the OU's gathering of information on what made a good

teacher - which could then be used in promotion applications - as an example of good practice.

7. ***What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?***

Opinion was divided over whether there was a direct link. A slight majority thought that if staff were treated well then RAE and QAA results would improve, with a knock-on effect on student attainment. However, this was generally based on intuition rather than hard evidence. For example, SCOP noted that if students knew what they were entitled to and that staff knew about this, then this would lead to a sense of shared endeavour and improved attainment. But AUT said that there was no evidence of a link and pointed out that student attainment appeared to be going up at a time when academic staff were increasingly getting heavier workloads, being underpaid and subject to widespread use of FTCs. For NATFHE the link was more of a negative one, in that treating staff badly led to worse QAA and RAE scores. While very supportive of part-time staff, NATFHE's own work had suggested that 'there can be serious grounds for concern over the quality of teaching and learning delivered by some part-time staff' (Chitnis and Williams, 1999: 3). Conversely it also noted that many good TQA reports include references to the fact that *all* staff, including part-timers, were included within good practice (ibid: 4). UCEA noted that many HEIs now put pressure on PhD supervisors to ensure that candidates completed in time in order to meet funding requirements.

We also asked if there was *a tendency for staff who got promoted to do less teaching*, and it was generally agreed that this was the case. However, this was seen as somewhat inevitable in that promotion might lead to a more varied range of responsibilities and a lessening of teaching load. This was especially true in the new sector where promotion often meant promotion into a different role.

Interviewees were also asked about *the use of postgraduates and other part-time staff in teaching undergraduates*, especially in the first and second years of undergraduate courses. It was generally agreed that this was widespread. However, interviewees generally felt that this had not had any negative effect on quality (although NATFHE disputes this, see ibid). SCOP and UCEA pointed to a much wider use of part-time staff in specialist HE colleges – for example Art Schools - where such people were often practising professionals. In such cases, this might lead to an *enhancement* of quality as students learned form practitioners. HEEON also pointed to a range of different cultures across the disciplines which affected how student attainment was treated.

We would also note that the fact that a class is being taught by a postgraduate does not automatically mean a decline in the standard of teaching. Many postgraduates will be at the cutting edge of their subjects and able to communicate this to their students. We were also told that the fact that an academic is an outstanding researcher does not necessarily mean that they will also be a wonderful teacher. There is no necessary link. Indeed, the QAA pointed out that the title of "lecturer" was anomalous in a situation where research was dominant.

In this respect ILTHE, perhaps not surprisingly, pointed out that HEIs and staff could show their commitment to professional standards and developing their

practice *via* CPD and ILTHE membership including taking part in ILTHE-sponsored CPD activities. There was general support for CPD, although this did not always imply support for ILTHE as it is presently structured.

8. ***What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?***

The overwhelming response here was that *the traditional model of career progression is* still dominant, including within the post-1992 sector. In essence this model is one where two routes are possible: (i) become a "research star" - a particularly attractive route in the age of the academic transfer market - or (ii) become a manager. Once again, there was little evidence of concentration on teaching being an attractive career route. But there was some evidence that a successful career could be built on the back of successful links with industry. UCEA also noted that career routes were likely to vary across disciplines.

Once choices were made - generally at the mid point of an academic's career - it was suggested that the pre-92 university sector was more flexible in terms of offering the chance to return to teaching after undertaking a management role. In part this is a reflection that many junior/middle management posts in the old sector - eg Head of Department or Dean - are fixed-term and/or elected.

Again there were calls for the recognition for teaching as a way to progress a career. HESDA asked where was the equivalent to reader for teaching specialists. The QAA argued that teaching was slowly being recognised as a route for promotion but others were more sceptical about this. We were also given examples of those who had gained personal chairs and has then insisted in continuing to teach 1st year undergraduate classes, but these tended to be cited because of their rarity.

There were also calls for more movement in and out of sector. This partly related to re-thinking what it is to be an academic which featured elsewhere in research. However, it was pointed out that the increasing requirement for new academics to have a PhD (and therefore a research record) before gaining a lectureship militated against this. SCOP suggested that exploring the idea of fellowships might facilitate more movement. However, UUK and HEFCE pointed out the wide range of work which academics already do alongside their academic work such as consultancies and links with industry. Thus this was not simply a case of either/or, as many academics retained a foot in both camps. Thus again, there is a need to recognise the diversity of practice across institutions and subject areas.

For the QAA staff development is the issue. HEIs need to make sure that it is provided and that staff see the worth of it in terms of their career development.

9. ***What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?***

This question again produce a diverse range of responses and a lack of overall consensus, seemingly reflecting a paucity of good examples in staffing practices Only one interviewee suggested HEIs which were examples of good practice, mentioning the Universities of Warwick, Leeds and Manchester. The AUT cited a paucity of good data here.

More generally there were some calls for *more training* especially for management, longstanding staff and PhD supervisors. This was allied to calls for more institutional planning, especially at this related to the assurance of quality. Here the roles of key people such as Personnel Directors was cited as being particularly important.

In part this reflects a point made by a number of interviewees about the *ownership* of policies and initiatives. UCEA noted that those HEIs which operated best practice were those who had made genuine attempts to tackle the relevant issue and would thus be aware, for example, of whether recruitment problems were institutional or departmental. It was generally felt that moves for change had to come from within HEIs and to be owned by senior management. On the other hand, the importance of *national initiatives* such as Athena, CUCO and the Equality Challenge Unit was also cited and seen as being useful.

It was again pointed out to us by SCOP and NATFHE that any training and staff development opportunities must be *made available to part-time staff* as well. Part-time staff need to be recruited properly, trained, developed, given the opportunity for promotion and to have careers.

10. How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?

The primary response reflected a need to *take career planning more seriously*. Key people in this included Heads of Department and Deans who need to see developing staff careers as part of their role. Planning also includes succession planning partly in order to counter the demographic time bomb.

Interviewees also cited a need for more *ongoing CPD and (skills-specific) training*. Once again this was seen as particularly needed at management level. HEFCE told us that managerialism - in the sense of the art of managing - had to be taken more seriously within HEIs.

Interviewees returned to the issue of a *need for greater flexibility* in the sense of allowing a greater amount of movement in and out of the sector at various times during a career. It could incorporate greater use of practitioners coming in as necessary. (This may also help to counter the demographic time bomb). But greater flexibility also included links and interaction with local community and business (which UUK described as the "third leg" of academe, after teaching and research). This might involve rethinking what it is to be an academic. UCEA noted that as employment practice was changing in other sectors, so it would have to change in HE. It cited the example of career breaks as a practice which was becoming increasingly used outside HE (with some analogies to the sabbatical system) but was rare in HE.

We were also offered a number of *outside examples* of large organisations which had to balance the desires and aspirations of large numbers of creative people with the needs of the organisations. The best organisations balanced demands on staff with support for them and amongst those who were said to be good at this were ICI, Unilever, the NHS and the Civil Service. The latter's practice of secondments was cited as a good example of flexibility and the NHS was quoted as somewhere

which encouraged cross-disciplinary working. The CRE cited local government and Home Office as examples of best practice in matters of racial equality.

However, the AUT also said that the continued use of fixed-term contracts militated against a deeper, wider, range of career opportunities. It also noted that whereas other sectors were becoming more flexible in their working practices, higher education appears to be becoming more rigid in terms of its bureaucracies and hierarchies.

11. What recommendations would your organisation make to develop the national capacity of HE staff?

Once again there was a diverse range of opinions amongst our interviewees.

One key area was that of various approaches to *staff development*. For interviewees this broad heading included proper induction procedures (so that new staff know what it is expected of them), better training (including support for senior management), ongoing CPD and other examples of professionalism, clearer career paths (especially for Contract Research Staff) and a better appraisal system. For HESDA it would also incorporate a standard minimum requirement for entry into the profession in the form of a licence to practice, while ILTHE said that supporting its role would lead help to build national capacity.

Once again there were calls for *more movement in and out of the sector* in terms of more flexible career paths.

The BBSRC said that HEIs needed to be aware of their wider *obligations to society*. Implicitly this might include AUT's call to cherish and develop the creativity, innovation and diversity that should be at the heart of the sector. This was especially so in terms of the Equal Opportunities agenda and ensuring diversity within the composition of the academic workforce. It might also include SCOP's call for peer observation of teaching.

12. What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?

Some of our interviewees had done work on the *actual costs* of making progress. NATFHE estimated in May 2000 that ending of sex discrimination in UK HEIs would cost just over £188M (NATFHE 2000:1), a figure also used by AUT (1994: 4). More recently AUT has calculated that across the UK 'an £300 million annually would be needed to meet equal pay obligations', a figure based on the Bett Report saying that it would be 2.5% of total expenditure (AUT 2001: 14). Both trades unions pointed out that new money is coming into the sector and, while some of this will need to be spent on developing new management and HR systems, it must also be used to reward staff.

Outside of the unions most interviewees referred to *other cost issues*. It was pointed out to us that while initially there might be high costs in putting new systems in place, these would fall once the systems were up and running. It was noted that there are also time costs associated with CPD. Certainly it was felt that there was a need to invest at a time of widening participation and a growing diversity amongst the student population which meant that staff had to be aware of a much greater range of issues. Provided that investment in staff development led

to greater retention of staff, then some costs will be countered by savings achieved via less staff turnover. HEEON said that any funding from HEFCE in this area should be dependent on proper reporting back, not simply on the original bid.

There were also issues around *management culture*. One research council suggested that within HE there has been too much short-termism whereas in the private sector major companies plan long term. UUK called for more money to be spent on the development needs of management, as this was an area within which the sector performed badly when compared to other sectors.

We probed interviewees about the *costs of **not** doing something*. Several examples were cited here: having people in posts who don't know what they are doing; a failure to train leading to poorer performance at a time when there is a need to keep the "customers" (students) happy or risk being sued; doing nothing will mean carrying on with current wastage; not doing something on Equal Opportunities could lead to equal value cases being brought to industrial tribunals; doing nothing will lead to lower morale and a fall in UK's international position; not demonstrating VfM will lead to political fall out. Perhaps above all, the point was made that properly trained people with relevant qualifications feel better about their job.

There was a general (if not universal) perception that will for *change has to come from within HEIs themselves*, but that HEFCE could help to provide incentives and direction. This relates to a previous point, made by the DRC amongst others, about the need for HEIs to *claim ownership* of the processes.

13. Any Further Comments?

This question produced calls HESDA and the BBSRC for (i) a *national body to take overall responsibility for staff development and careers* (BBSRC) and (ii) *a sector-wide Workforce Development Plan* (HESDA). When joined with AUT's point that employers have to make sure that balance between institutional and individual need is met, this suggests that there is some willingness to consider how best to develop staff capacity in a measured way. AUT emphasised its commitment to some form of accreditation of professionalism, although it is not happy with ILTHE as it is presently constructed.

Interviewees also spoke of the need to *tackle the demographic time bomb*. This was again something which Bett alluded to, citing Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Engineering as potential problem areas (IRHEPC 1999: para.172). Kinman (1998: 21) has also cited the fact that the average age of academics is 45. AUT pointed out that there is some urgency about this time bomb issue as the supply chain of academics starts a long way back, so *today's* graduates have to be convinced that an academic career is worthwhile. UCEA also noted a need not to concentrate on academics *per se* as the line between academic and academic-related is becoming increasingly hazy at a time when, for example, technicians were increasingly getting involved in the provision of on-line learning.

Others pointed to unresolved *Equal Opportunities* issues which we deal with below.

Finally, HEFCE pointed out here and elsewhere that a lot is right with the sector, a point noted elsewhere by AUT which notes that: 'With 1% of the world's population, we undertake 5% of the word's research, produce 8% of the publications, and receive 9% of the citations' (AUT 2001: 3) The question remains how to sustain this in light of the issues highlighted here.

14. Unresolved Equal Opportunities issues

'Best Practice'

A successful equal opportunities policy helps to improve working relations within an institution, to improve its standing as a fair employer within the local community and therefore to improve its abilities to attract both staff and students from a wider pool of applicants. The benefits are of ethical and financial significance.

(CUCO 1996).

We wish to draw particular attention here to issues of Equal Opportunities which were cited throughout the research. While we were not commissioned specifically to look at this issue, we were asked to identify best practice. The fact that of 15 organisations interviewed, four (CRE, DRC, EOC and HEEON) had direct interests in this area and two others (AUT and NATFHE) major interests in it, will have affected the frequency with which such issues occurred. We also note that the EOC told us that is hard to spread best practice across a sector made up of autonomous institutions. Nevertheless, it is clear that concern was much more widespread than this immediate constituency. We would note here that many of the issues raised are not unique to HE, but also that the interviews provided evidence of a widespread sense of frustration at the lack of progress in this area.

Perhaps the major disappointment was that none of the Equal Opportunities organisations cited HE as an example of best practice. On the contrary, HE was frequently described as lagging behind other organisations in the private and public sector. For example, the DRC noted that there is a low level of awareness of the disability rights agenda within HE and that not one HEI is a trailblazer in this area. Instead DRC pointed to certain retailers and financial institutions which have made much more positive moves to accommodate the needs of disabled staff. For example, of 361 members of the Employers' Forum on Disability, only six are HEIs. This can be seen as part of a more general malaise and both CRE and EOC were able to cite examples of HEIs losing industrial tribunal cases on Equal Opportunities issues. The EOC spoke of getting many enquiries from within HE. During *none* of the interviews did we find interviewees claiming the HE was at the cutting edge of practice. This is to be lamented when, as the DRC noted, HEIs and their staff still do much to shape the UK's intellectual climate, including our understanding of Equal Opportunities issues.

We would also note that regardless of any moral claim, interviewees cited forthcoming changes to the Race Relations Amendment Act and the Disability Discrimination Act, both due to come into effect in 2002 as potentially hazardous for HE. As one interviewee put it, the law is always there as a last resort and, ultimately, Equal Opportunities issues are non-negotiable.

A number of issues recurred, some of which have already been mentioned. The first relates to the *need for accurate base line data*. The DRC was unaware of *any* HE figures about its area of responsibility and the CRE argued that there was a lack of information about retention in the sector from an Equal Opportunities perspective.

Along with many calls for open and transparent recruitment and promotions procedures, our interviewees also noted a need for *close monitoring* of statistics about race, gender and disability. However, this is of little use with *action on problem areas*. NATFHE noted that HEIs had to first accept that Equal Opportunities was a problem, then do something about and, moreover, be seen to do something about it. A previous report on ethnicity and employment in HE noted that: 'Even where the critical elements of policy are present, such as ethnic monitoring of job applications, most institutions do not use these statistics in the context of policy making' (Carter *et al* 1999: 65).

It was apparent, However, that where discrimination existed it tended to be indirect, rather than direct. Thus the CRE argued that where informal networks existed, then this had the potential to lead to indirect discrimination, although HE was far from unique in this. (For example, if chats in pubs led to promotions, then this was likely to indirectly discriminate against Muslim women). But it was also noted that the EOC had successfully brought a case against one HEI which discriminated against a woman by awarding a permanent post to a less well qualified male colleague because the female lecturer was expected to have time off to have a child and this in turn was expected to affect her department's RAE score (EOC press release 13 April 2000).

There is previous evidence that women are paid less in all grades in HE including at professorial level (AUT 1999: 8). Women are more subject to casualised employment than men in all subject areas (ibid: 53, 56 and 102). The DRC told us that casualisation is also likely to have a disproportionate effect on disabled applicants, as those who feel that they might face discrimination are less likely to apply for insecure jobs which increases the likelihood of having to go through (possibly discriminatory) recruitment processes frequently. There is also evidence that whereas 34% of white academic staff are on FTCs, the figure for non-whites is 49% (Carter *et al* 1999: 19). Furthermore:

> *'Three quarters of all institutions said that they routinely monitor job applications by ethnicity but only 30 per cent said that any policy decisions had ever been made on the basis of ethnic statistics. Monitoring of other aspects of employment was not common: only 26 per cent of respondents monitor internal promotions and only 11 per cent monitor the grievance and disciplinary pro dure. Only 5 per cent of our sample said they had a positive action plan for ethnic minorities'.* (ibid: 34)

Lack of political will

We would also note that there seems to be a certain amount of political will about tackling the Equal Opportunities issue, as reflected in the Secretary of State's letter to HEFCE of 23 November 2000 which dealt this issue in general, but with a particular emphasis on racial equality. We note the setting up by HEFCE of the

Equality Challenge Unit as one manifestation of the importance of the issue. However, NATFHE lamented that it saw few moves within HEIs to accommodate the Equal Opportunities. It cited the example of family friendly policies, which were a government aspiration, but which had where little progress had been made within Higher Education. It wants HEIs to work in partnership with unions, as employers in other sectors do, but also called on HEFCE to tell HEIs that funding will be withdrawn if Equal Opportunities in higher education is not tackled with sufficient vigour

Once again we were told by interviewees of the need for HEIs' to take *ownership* of these issues and of the need for HEIs' to develop their own good practice which could serve as role model for the rest of the sector. In this sense, HEIs could learn from each other.

Although we note that Bett recognised a problem in that different pay structures made it hard to ensure equal pay for work of equal value (IRHEPC 1999, para.109), it is at least disappointing to note that two years later AUT is able to provide evidence that things are getting worse. We would also agree with the DRC who told us that much of the remedial action which is needed "is not rocket science". Indeed, as the DRC noted, higher education is a place where the understanding of Equal Opportunities issues has been developed and is continually being researched. In such a situation it is a little ironic that HEI's own Equal Opportunities' polices were so frequently criticised.

There have been numerous recommendations about what to do here, including those of various stakeholders interviewed as part of this research (Carter *et al* 1999:70-71, EOC nd, NATFHE 2000 53-58). The CRE pointed out that as routes into academe were significantly different for ethnic minorities when compared to the white majority, so would be routes into academic life, something which bears further consideration. The EOC said the HEIs should carry out pay reviews in line with its Code of Practice in order to see if they were vulnerable to equal pay cases. NATFHE suggested annual figures on ethnicity and gender and the resources used to tackle these issues should be placed on HEIs' websites. AUT noted that best practice would include the power to block appointments on Equal Opportunities grounds, so that policies in this area were not simply lip service. In this area SCOP noted that some of the specialist colleges had more women in senior positions, possibly reflecting a bias towards subjects which have traditionally attracted more women.

We would endorse a guide produced by the CRE, EOC and CVCP which stated that HEIs should ask themselves where they are, where they are going, what action is need and how they will know when success has been achieved (Powney *et al* 1997). Perhaps then we will see the trailblazers that one of our interviewees hoped for.

15. Summary

The main points to recur in key stakeholders interviews can be broken down into a number of overlapping factors which recurred throughout the research. These are as follows:

- A general feeling that academics are an underpaid and over-burdened

profession and that the things which once made the profession attractive - individual autonomy and the chance to pursue one's own interest - are continually being eroded by increasing workload and bureaucratic burdens.

- Many calls for more staff development and training as partial remedy to the above and for more CPD across the board. Training was frequently, although not exclusively, expressed as a particular need for senior management.
- Calls for the art of management to be more highly developed
- The need for more flexibility in promotions and recruitment - including more promotions via teaching (or other non-research activity) and the recruitment of a more varied workforce. Much talk of HEIs recruiting and promoting in their own image.
- A range of unresolved *Equal Opportunities issues* including evidence of widespread racial and sexual discrimination. These issues will become even more acute following amendments to the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act next year. To this we would add the potential of the forthcoming European Directive on fixed-term contracts to impact upon employment practice within HEIs.
- The EOC viewed the Bett Report as the key document and noted that current Government policy is shaping this agenda.
- This in turn relates to the need for open and transparent recruitment and promotions policies which are understood by staff, involve appropriate Equal Opportunities and other training for those involved (and no training should = no involvement), be monitored, and be acted on if problems are found.
- Problems are likely to be exacerbated by continued use of Fixed-term Contracts (FTCs).
- There are particular issues concerning part-time staff who form around a third of the academic workforce. They should have the same training and staff development opportunities as full time staff. This is especially so for those with under 25% of a full-time contract who do not appear in HESA statistics at this time.
- Calls for more flexibility in career paths and in movement in and out of sector.

16. Concluding comments

The interviews which were carried in this part of the research inevitably produced a diverse range of responses. To an extent those responses reflect the orientations of the organisations from which interviewees were drawn. In a highly diverse sector, with a range of different stakeholders, unanimity on key issues is not to be expected. Thus while our interviewees shared some common ground on what the key issues are, there was a great deal of diversity about what should be done.

In part this is a reflection of the *inherent tensions* which are at the heart of the issues which we were asked to address. For example, there may be tensions between the desire to have flexibility in appointments and promotions procedures and the desire to tackle Equal Opportunities issues. There may be tensions between widening participation and achieving (and maintaining) research excellence. There are tensions between academic freedom (which may rely on allowing individuals the free time to be creative) and calls for better management of academics. Perhaps

above all there is a tension between wanting to improve a sector which is performing well by international standards and not wanting to further burden a sector which has gone through a constant stream of changes over the past ten or so years. The danger of initiative fatigue is all too apparent and the resistance which the sector is capable of has recently been illustrated by events around quality assurance.

It is clear that HEIs , and therefore their staff, are under pressure to perform in all sorts of ways – to widen access, to be excellent in research, to maintain teaching quality, to commercialise, to be innovative with new technology, to tackle Equal Opportunities and so on and so forth. In the context of a diverse sector, it is little surprise that some HEIs prioritise some areas over others. The issue for HEFCE may be to ensure that HEIs know what *its* priorities are and how they will be rewarded for responding to those priorities. This implies that the priorities be clear and, as far as possible, complimentary. To an extent, the diversity of responses apparent in this part of the research reflects competing agendas. The implicit hope is that HEFCE can give policy steers which address the tensions and set priorities.

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18. List on organisations interviewed

Association of University Teachers (AUT)
Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
Commission for Racial Equality (CRE)
Disability Rights Commission (DRC)
Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)
Higher Education Equal Opportunities Network (HEEON)
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
Higher Education Staff Development Association (HESDA)
Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE)
National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE)
Quality Association Agency (QAA)
Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)
Universities and Colleges Employers' Association (UCEA)
Universities UK (UUK).

Appendix 4: HEFCE survey of human resource managers in HEIs

1. Introduction

Evidence is presented in this Appendix from the survey of Heads of Personnel in higher education institutions (HEIs) in England (the questionnaire is in Appendix 1). This survey was carried out largely via email invitation to participate and then web-based survey. The survey returns contain a range of quantitative data and qualitative comments from respondents about:

- staffing policies and procedures in place in HEIs
- reviewing policies and procedures
- recruitment, retention and promotion.

Each of these is presented below. First however, we look at the profile of the respondents.

2. The respondents

All HEIs (132) listed as receiving funds from HEFCE were invited to take part in the survey of Heads of Personnel. These included 17 schools and institutes of the University of London which are funded separately by HEFCE.

Of the 132 HEIs, 35 (or 27%) sent in returns. Although this is a lower response than hoped for, in general terms there is a reasonable representation across the returns by geographical spread, by size of institution and by type of institution and subject areas.

Institutional profile

Looking at the number of students (FTEs), there are 17 HEIs spread across the category of fewer than 10,000 students, 14 between 10,000 and 20,000 students, two in the largest range over 20,000 and two HEIs for which figures are unknown. In terms of staff numbers the spread is across all ranges. Many respondents gave figures which included only academics, or excluded hourly-paid so the figures are less clear for any breakdown at this level. In terms of type of HEIs, again there is an even spread of returns with 16 of the 'old' or pre '92 types and 17 of the 'new' or post-92 type. A further two are small college-based college institutions.

3. HEI Policies and Procedures

The survey sought to map out the human resource policies and procedures within HEIs as they applied to permanent staff, fixed-term/part-time staff and hourly-paid staff who teach. Although the picture only represents a small number, it has yielded an invaluable overview of institutional policies and procedures.

We asked institutions to indicate which human resource policies and procedures they had in place. In Table 1, while many of the policies listed might be expected to appear as routine human resources procedures, it is interesting to note that the level of applicability of these policies to 'permanent', 'part-time/fixed-term' and 'hourly' paid staff is the most illuminating aspect of the data. It should be remembered that of course we are dealing with a small number of responses and

that there is considerable variation in the way HEIs describe and count their staff.

Table 1: Policies and procedures in HEIs (Survey Q1)
N=32

Human resources policies and procedures	% Permanent Staff	% Part-time/ fixed-term contract	% Hourly paid
Annual Review of Teaching Staff	71	71	14
Career Guidance	43	40	20
CPD Programmes	74	71	40
Disability	86	83	77
Equal Opportunities	100	97	89
Equal Pay	60	57	49
Harassment	94	91	86
Investors in People (IIP)	31	31	31
Induction	100	94	46
Leave of Absence/Study Leave	94	83	9
Mentoring	71	69	26
Probation	97	89	26
Promotion of Teaching Staff	86	80	14
Recruitment and Selection	94	91	57
Redundancy	80	69	46
Sabbaticals	74	57	3
Staff Appraisal	91	89	26
Staff Development	94	91	57
Staff Handbook	74	74	49

The patterns and trends are interesting. Looking horizontally across the table the applicability of policies across type of staff can be compared with the range of institutional policies. For example, we see that equal opportunities policies are well spread across the respondent institutions but that coverage is not complete when we look at hourly-paid staff. Equal pay policies are in place in 60% of our respondent institutions. Induction is guaranteed if you are a permanent member of staff but would only be available to hourly-paid in 46 per cent of the respondent HEIs. Study leave is available for permanent staff in 94 per cent of respondent institutions but for hourly-paid in only 9 per cent and this drops to 3 per cent for sabbaticals for hourly-paid staff.

Over a quarter of institutions had no CPD, annual review or mentoring schemes in place and IIP has low coverage in institutions. More than half the institutions did not offer staff a career guidance scheme.

4. Reviewing policy within institutions

Another important aspect of human resources policies is how often institutions review their policies and procedures. From respondent institutions (35), there is a mixed picture of progress emerging in Table 2.

Table 2: Number of HEIs reviewing policies and procedures (Survey Q15)
N=35

Policies	Within last 2 years	Currently under review	No response
Equal opportunities	17	12	6
Promotion of teaching staff	20	7	8
Recruitment and selection	17	9	9
Staff appraisal	20	13	2
Staff development	25	7	3

Most respondent institutions had 'reviewed in the last 2 years' or 'were reviewing' staff development and overall there was ongoing policy review of important areas such as equal opportunities. The nine institutions who did not respond to the recruitment and selection section may not be representative of any wider sample of HEIs.

Institutions were asked also whether they carried out an annual audit of teaching staff (Q16) and only just over a third (34%) indicated they did, 18 (51%) did not and 6 did not respond.

One specific area which has an ongoing effect on Human Resources departments is the changing legal framework within which they operate. Institutions were asked to indicate if they were aware of recent or forthcoming legislative changes (Q17) and if they had implemented any legal requirements.

Table 3: Status of Human Resource policies in relation to recent legislative change (Survey Q17)
N=35

Legislation	% Aware	% Implementing	% Both	% No response
Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)	46	40	11	3
SEN Disability Discrimination Act (2001)	49	34	14	3
Human Rights Act (1998)	63	28	6	3
EU directives on part-time working (2000)	23	51	20	6
EU directives on fixed-term working (2002)	68	17	9	6

We have a fairly positive picture (Table 3) of institutional progress towards awareness and implementation of legislative changes which mostly reflect the required timescales. However, for the directive on part-time working, 33 out of 35 respondent institutions (71%) were implementing that policy compared to 18 (51%) implementing the new race relations legislation and 17 (40%) implementing the recent amendments to the disability legislation. Again the sample is fairly small

and may not represent the wider picture across all HEIs.

5. Recruitment, retention and promotion

Although there are many overlaps between the impact of recruitment, retention and promotion policies on academic life and staff who teach, we shall look at each in turn. First, however, we give some background information on turnover of staff from the survey responses.

Turnover

Institutions were asked to give an indication of the turnover rate of all teaching staff. Most institutions attempted to provide some indicative figures for 2000-2001 although any comparative exercise would be difficult to undertake. The rate ranged from a small college quoting 25 per cent to an average sized institution of 700 staff and 7100 students having 3 per cent with many variations in between.

Most institutions gave examples of departments which were experiencing higher than average turnover. Those most frequently mentioned included (in descending order of occurrence):

- Computing and computer science
- Law
- Accountancy and finance
- Business, business management and information systems
- Engineering (including electrical)
- Education.

Other departments which were cited as having high turnover included medicine and veterinary departments, health studies and specific subjects such as mathematics and geography.

Institutions also highlighted areas where there were problems in recruiting staff. These tended to mirror the same departments for which there was high turnover. So again we find computing and IT, finance and accountancy being noted. Some institutions are experiencing specific problems in recruiting certain types of staff, eg fixed-term staff in biological science and in engineering. Smaller institutions reported difficulties in recruiting specialist staff. For some it was difficult to find health care staff with an HE background. There was also the acknowledgement by one institution that it was becoming more difficult to recruit staff across all subject areas.

Recruitment

Respondents identified a range of factors which support recruitment of staff who teach (Q2). Some opted not to complete this section (14 out of 35) but non-response does not imply a lack of policies or procedures because the information is available from the quantitative evidence in Table 1. Those who did comment highlighted policies in their institutions which support recruitment. Examples are:

- equal opportunities policies (including disability)
- Investors in People status
- incentives such as generous removal expenses and start-up packages
- single long term lecturer scales.

Salary issues were the most recurring themes among respondents as inhibitor to recruitment but they also listed a diverse range of barriers to the recruitment of high quality academic staff including (Q3):

- location factors such as being London based or high costs of living/housing in some areas
- over-emphasis on research
- adverse salary differentials (against market rate and other professions, eg teaching, health, ICT, business)
- competition from other HEIs ('RAE recruitment wars') and non-university employers especially in some subject areas
- perceived reputation of institution
- low salary levels
- shortage of staff in certain disciplines
- heavy work load if staff are aiming to achieve high levels in both teaching and research
- promotions criteria (dominance of research; quota system).

Some institutions gave examples of initiatives which address recruitment issues such as (Q4):

- staff development opportunities
- support for non-teaching staff with necessary skills and interest/enthusiasm to become lecturers

Retention

The survey sought to identify which measures HEIs had in place to encourage staff retention (Q5a). Table 4 provides a summary of the responses. Again there is variation overall between different types of measure. Few offer retraining or performance-related pay, for example, but most provide CPD, equal opportunities action plans and staff appraisal. One institution felt they had no retention problems. Less measurable but tangible influences such as positive institutional ethos and supportive management were selected as important for retention.

Table 4: Measures in place to encourage staff retention (survey Q5a) (N=35)

Retention measures	**% of respondent institutions which selected this category**
Continuing professional development	86
Equal opportunities strategies/ action plans	86
Fast track promotion	43
Leave of absence	80
Mentoring	66
Performance related pay	37
Performance review	46
Positive institutional ethos	60
Redeployment	46
Regrading	60
Retraining	34
Secondments	43
Staff appraisal	89
Staff development opportunities	91
Supportive management structure	74

To this list some institutions added other more specific factors which aided retention (Q5b):

- the ethos of the institution being more important than any specific policy or initiative
- team working
- work/life balance policies.

And they also mentioned the effect of particular initiatives on retention such as:

- merit based bonus payments
- a local teaching fellowship scheme
- generous sabbaticals and externally funded research leave
- 'in-house' job evaluation scheme for use in all academic staff promotion
- re-structuring the use of principal lecturer grades to reduce 'bottleneck' at top of senior lecturer grade
- converting fixed-term contracts to permanent contracts which is improving staff quality
- encouragement of membership of Institute of Learning and Teaching (ILT).

In some cases HEIs saw retention initiatives directly linked to promotion policy with one institution citing its academic promotion procedure – giving equal weight to teaching and research – as a factor which supported staff retention. Other factors which respondent institutions thought aided retention included:

- promotions to Senior lecturer now considered 3 times a year in place of an annual review
- promotion on merit without a fixed quota
- fast track promotion procedures
- providing incentive schemes which encourage teaching staff to additional income by a local Research Incentive Scheme.

There was a mixed response when asked about any particular initiatives which

sought to retain part-time teaching staff, hourly-paid, and those on fixed-term contracts (Q7). For some, these staff had the same opportunities for staff development and promotion as permanent staff. For others, new legislation will overtake any local initiatives to change the over-use of fixed-term contracts and some HEIs are already reviewing them. In some HEIs, turnover was low for these categories of staff so no initiatives are in place for retention. As noted above, regular review of staff composition and the translation of people from fixed-term to permanent contract were viewed as examples of good practice.

When asked about factors which inhibit retention of staff who teach (Q6), respondent institutions provided expansive comments within which there were recurring themes. For some it was external factors over which institutions had little control:

- the high cost of London housing and commuting
- the low level of the London allowance
- cost of living in certain areas of the country
- salary— low levels; differentials with competitor sectors; inflexibility within national pay structures.

Within institutions, there were also factors which had a bearing on retention of staff:

- heavy teaching loads
- increasingly onerous quality assurance regimes
- fixed-term contracts
- budgetary constraints
- for 'staff who only teach' a strong research ethos can inhibit retention
- lack of performance review systems.

Promotion

We have seen from the narrative above that there are issues arising about promotion. In 86 per cent of respondent institutions, promotion policies apply to permanent staff, in 80 per cent for fixed-term/part-time staff but only in 14 per cent of respondent institutions for hourly-paid (see Table 1), although it should be noted that most institutions are reviewing or have reviewed policy on promotion of staff (See Table 2). We have seen also that policies to support retention are directly linked to promotion issues.

Further information is available from the survey returns about promotion issues. Institutions were asked (Q11) specifically to indicate if there were promotion policies at institutional or departmental level which related to fixed-term and/or hourly-paid to which 51 per cent of HEI respondents said yes, and 49 per cent no. When asked if they had published criteria (Q12) for promotion of teaching staff, most (86%) said 'yes', 11 per cent said 'no' and 3 per cent did not respond. A further question on the flexibility of promotions criteria (Q13) elicited the following information:

Table 5: Flexibility of promotions criteria (Survey Q13)
(N-35)

How flexible?	%
Flexible	14
Somewhat flexible	40
Fixed	31
No response	14

When asked how universally these criteria applied across departments/units (Q14), a total of 31 out of the 35 responses (89%) indicated that they applied across **all** departments.

The qualitative evidence provides illumination for many of these statistics.

Institutions were asked to identify policies and practices which support the promotion of high quality academic staff who teach (Q8). Some are listed below:

- conduct quality assessment of teaching skills of promotion candidates
- transparent and objective criteria for promotion
- 'in-house' job evaluation
- single lecturer scale
- rewards such as distinction awards, sabbaticals and leave of absence
- fast track procedures
- recognising responsibility – fixed-term posts of responsibility; increased allowances for extra responsibility
- separate salary scales for heads of study centres and academic managers
- appraisal and counselling.

The qualitative data also reveal HEI views on what factors act as barriers to promotion for academic staff (Q9). These include:

- the perceived emphasis on research
- restrictions on number of promotions – cost control/budgets limits number (but provide quality assurance)
- age structure in some departments
- teaching loads can inhibit staff development and therefore weaken promotion case
- low staff turnover limits career development opportunities
- lack of clarity about senior academic roles
- poor people management skills and practices
- salary scales are narrow (more grades would reward different levels of contribution more accurately).

One institution noted that there were no barriers to promotion as all staff were expected to carry out research and teaching.

There were some examples given of particular initiatives related to promotion (Q10) although there was some overlap here between this responses and earlier comments on policies in individual institutions. For some, it was:

- providing additional increments to reward outstanding teaching and administration
- having academic promotions scheme and performance appraisal schemes
- creating new opportunities – eg teaching fellowships; introducing senior lectureships
- recognising staff's career breaks and non-standard careers.

6. General issues

Finally, institutions were asked at the end of the survey to describe what three factors they would suggest to improve the appointment, retention and promotion of academic staff (Q18). The headlines from this qualitative data are given under some key headings:

Financial

- higher salaries – enhancement of basic pay via national pay awards; revised salary structure (as Bett Report); funding for increased salaries across the board as well as targeted via HR strategy initiatives
- performance related pay
- national subsidised mortgage scheme
- increased London allowance
- one pension scheme across 'old' and 'new' HEIs.

Managerial

- lively imaginative and effective departmental leaders
- greater people management skills at all levels of academic management
- review contract arrangements in post '92 institutions
- cease fixed-term contracts
- use of flexible contracts for joint appointments with other sectors.

Recruitment

- tailor selection process to specific roles, eg using systematic assessment.

Staff development

- opportunity to diversify and develop in early years
- identify needs and plan for CPD at early stage
- clearer and faster career structures
- funding for enhanced training and development.

Retention

- regulate and reduce workloads
- implement a retention allowance
- reduce administrative burden
- improvement in the non-cash elements of remuneration packages.

Assessment

- lighter touch assessment and quality assurance
- decrease in external monitoring.

Appendix 5: Case studies

Conventions to protect confidentiality

To protect the confidentiality of the case study departments and institutions, the following conventions have been adopted. In denoting the size of the institution, small means having less than 5,000 FTE students; medium, 5,000-14,999; large, over 15,000. Precise QAA and RAE ratings are not given as these might identify the institution. Instead, QAA scores of 22 and above and RAE scores of 4 and above are described as high, those below as moderate. In adopting this simple convention, we acknowledge that local perceptions of what is a high score vary considerably across the HE sector.

To protect the confidentiality of individual informants where direct quotations are used, staff in permanent promoted posts (senior lecturer and above in pre-1992 HEIs, principal lecturer and above in post-1992 HEIs) are identified as 'senior'. 'Junior' staff comprise those on basic grades, or with fixed-term or hourly-paid contracts. When quoted, individuals are identified by the unit they work in and a number (for example A1.2 signifies case study A, unit 1, interviewee number 2).

The analysis takes account of the very different circumstances of sub-sets of the 'junior' group: unpromoted staff with permanent contracts; fixed-term contract staff (some of whom have fractional contracts); hourly-paid part-time teachers (most of whom are on temporary contracts) and permanent fractional contract staff.

CASE STUDY A

Size: Medium
Type: Pre-1992 university with strong research reputation
Location: Single campus location in large town.

Mission:
It is a research-led university that is utterly committed to the provision of teaching of the highest quality.

Staff development policies:
Teaching certificate available for all staff to take, compulsory for new staff. Mentoring system in place, but staff state that the quality and usefulness of this is questionable.

Academic departments:
Staff interviewed came from two departments. There is a high level of consistency in approach across the HEI except where noted. The main discipline in unit A1 is Biosciences and in A2 is Business and Management. Both units achieved high scores in their latest RAE and QAA assessments.

Sample interviewed:
Five senior staff: two heads of department, two professors, one long service senior lecturer.
Four junior staff: one long service lecturer, two newly appointed lecturers, one hourly-paid teacher (postgraduate student).

ISSUES ARISING, RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion

Factors outwith institutions

For one department there was the ever-increasing problem of losing people from within the system, and people not even entering the system due to the significantly higher levels of financial rewards offered by the private sector/industry. For the other department this was not such an issue as competition came only from other HEIs.

The location is attractive to most staff as it is reasonably central in England. However, it is noted that house prices are significantly higher now than a few years ago, which could be a problem for newer members of staff lower down the scale and trying to get a foot on the property ladder.

Several interviewees identified partners and families as playing an important determining factor in choice of area.

Factors within institution

Recruitment

The HEI has a strong reputation that plays a significant part in attracting good quality staff and researchers. This in turn has led to a high quality of student being attracted to the institution.

Recruitment problems arise because, in order to appoint a new member of staff, the head of department has to apply to the Estimates and Grants Committee, an institutional-level group which authorises the recruitment of new people. This can be very constraining and inhibit the head's freedom to recruit new staff. However, once the permission to appoint has been granted the head has in a sense control over the process, as long as the criteria set by the university with regards to procedure are met.

Another significant problem is that the Estimates and Grant Committee has a policy of not automatically funding the recruitment of individuals to replace members of staff that have left. This means, therefore, that if the heads wish to replace an individual they must be able to fund it from their own resources.

Interviewees also felt that the HEI could provide more resources in order that the sciences might attract the 'big names' and their research teams from America.

One of the departments had a shortage of support staff which meant that the lecturers have had to take on many duties themselves. One individual identified that she had had to learn to type since joining the institution due to this shortage.

Turnover

One department had experienced a high turnover over the last two years, with several people moving to other universities for a chair: *'If they had waited a bit longer they would have probably got chairs here'* (A2.1), It was, however, the belief that this was not the only reason for leaving. It often seems that the HEI *'does work you hard, there's a lot of scrutiny over what you are doing as well. The money is pretty good but not fantastic, but you are a fish swimming around where there are some bloody big predators'* (A2.1).

The other department however, did not seem to have this problem. Over the past four or five years it has not lost many staff, approximately 15, but the head believes that: *'People don't leave this place generally, certainly not this department, because they don't like it. They move on because they find that there are better deals elsewhere'* (A1.1). However, in one or two instances the department has lost people which has resulted in research groups collapsing. The head of department feels that this loss was unnecessary but the Research and Grants Committee was not able to offer a chair to keep them.

The view is that the resources within the institution are of a high standard. However, several members of staff in one of the departments believe that there is a shortage, with one noting that the institution *'is a victim of its own success'* (A1.3), and that despite expansion of buildings there is still overcrowding within the laboratories.

Virtually all power and decision-making authority rested with committees and panels at the institutional level, with little freedom, flexibility and autonomy for the heads.

Staff perspective on working at this HEI

Staff within both departments identified that variety was a positive factor about the job. *'I've always been quite attracted by the balance of teaching, research, writing and periodically some major course management or course development. I like the combination. I think I'd be unhappy working full-time on teaching, or certainly unhappy working full-time on research'* (A2.3).

However, many staff believe that there was less variety due to increases in teaching and administration.

Autonomy was mentioned by those in both groups as being of great importance to them, yet there was a general consensus that this was being hampered by increased bureaucracy, red

tape and administration. *'I think that with all the best will in the world it's difficult to maintain your enthusiasm and really feel that you are doing as good a job as possible, just because of the increase in workload'* (A1.3).

Freedom was also mentioned as being a positive factor of the job, especially by staff in the science department who, in comparison to employment in the private sector, had control over their own research. However, the downside was that lack of financial gain accompanied this freedom. *'You control your own destiny more, you've got more freedom, but the downside is that you don't get the rewards financially'* (A1.2).

There was a consensus that there was a relatively high level of flexibility for staff. However, both heads of department expressed frustration at the lack of flexibility, freedom and autonomy that the central institution allowed them as 'managers'.

'I think that it is very difficult in a large organisation to have some influence about what's going on, so I do not feel empowered at the moment, I feel disenfranchised, I'm not able to influence the way things have gone' (A2.1).

There was widespread acknowledgement amongst staff from both departments that research was the only real way to progress and be promoted, with the head of department even saying: *'I think it would be almost unheard [here] for someone to be promoted on the basis of teaching alone'* (A2.1). Despite this, many staff valued and enjoyed teaching; However, some of the older staff in one department expressed dislike for increased teaching loads.

Newer members of one department felt that it could do more to help integrate new members of staff. *'Well I think the department has fallen down at virtually every fence to do with its induction of new staff formally, informally, socially and financially'*(A1.4).

All the staff mentioned issues of pay, especially when comparing salaries to those available in industry, but generally it was not the most important issue. As one member of staff put it: *'I don't think when I come into work every morning I'm not being paid very much to do this job. therefore I won't do a good job'* (A1.3). It was however, flagged as a cause for concern with regards to attracting people into academia and retaining them. *'The bright ones realise how crap the career is and how crap the career structure is and they are not prepared to tolerate it...the good people are leaking out of this career at every stage'* (A1.4).

2. *How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?*

Recruitment

This HEI has abolished the lecturer A scale, and it is well known that the institution tends to pay its staff more than most universities. As there is no lecturer A scale it has a large amount of flexibility with regards to salary. The head of department, and the chair of the academics committee responsible for that particular individual, determine the salary structure for each individual.

A probationary period of four years is served, unless they have had teaching experience at other universities, in which case they are given time off in lieu. For example if they have taught for two-three years elsewhere then they have a one-two year probationary period.

Within the probationary period all new members of staff must complete the institution's teaching certificate. This is seen as being as an effective approach. *'The probationary period is very good for most people because they are relieved of some of the teaching and they can build up their research activity in this time'* (A1.1).

People on probation are reviewed annually to discuss how they are getting on, and it has been known for the probationary period to be extended if it is felt necessary.

As a research-led institution, it has tried to recruit the best people possible. The institution had a recruitment drive, in 1995/96. A lot of money was spent in attracting 35 top researchers to the university of whom many stayed at the end of the six-year period and were absorbed into the staff. Some did leave as other institutions made better offers.

Retention

Promotion was viewed by both heads as being the key to retention, due to the recent policy adopted by the institution that assumes that if someone is good then they deserve promotion. This resulted in a skewed distribution of staff, with the institution having a disproportionately higher number of people at professorial level than most other universities.

Neither head viewed retention as a problem. However, several of the staff indicated that they did keep an eye out for other positions although they were not actively applying.

Newer staff in one department also indicated that they felt very isolated during the first formative months of employment, and had considered leaving.

Industry was seen as an option by many of the staff, particularly within the science departments, mainly due to the significantly higher financial rewards. However, having found out more about the workings of the private sector, many had decided that they valued the freedom and autonomy that academic jobs provided, especially the longer serving lecturers.

'*When you've worked in a British university for as long as I have, the thought of all those constraints and company ethos...if you were imbibed into that in your twenties, fair enough, but for somebody like me it would be quite difficult*' (A1).

Promotion

Staff recognised that the way to progress within the university was through research output, with many people indicating that teaching was definitely a secondary criterion for progressing and gaining promotion.

The main criteria identified for progression were research publications, research grant income, teaching and good administration skills, and a good sense of collegiality. However, the emphasis is on research, as the university views itself as a research-led institution.

It is the belief of both heads that the key to retention is the institution's policy of promotion, which enables people to see that they have a reasonable chance of being promoted. However, as the staff and the heads of departments indicated, it is virtually impossible to get to and through the promotion process without support from the head of the individual's group. Individuals can approach the heads of departments themselves, but those who have been put forward by heads of group receive more backing from the head of department.

3. What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?

General consensus among all interviewed in both departments was that QAA and RAE assessments are having a detrimental affect on the institution, due to the amount of administration (especially QAA) and the pressure to produce quantity rather than quality when it comes to the RAE. Some members believe that this stress could lead newer people to leave.

Results of the RAE play a large part in the funding received by both of the departments, which ultimately has an impact on performance and progression.

'We are working harder than ever. There has been working calcification, time is of the essence and that is why the quality of what we do is likely to be torn. That's downhill for the work, and I'd much rather everybody produced one piece in four years which the relevant audience, which may be small says, "Bloody good piece". Whereas of course what happens is, as one of my colleagues said, "I've got my four pieces, so now I can take time out and think" (A2.1).

The RAE is seen to be detrimental to the quality of the actual research and work as the emphasis is on productivity.

In general there is the belief that teaching is a secondary criterion for progressing and achieving promotion. One informant (A2.2) feels that promotion is only possible on the basis of excellent publications, but that teaching may be taken into account if supported by lesser publications.

This is further confirmed by a senior member of staff in A2: *'I think it would be almost unheard of in this institution for someone to be promoted on the basis of teaching alone'* (A2.1).

There was also the view that the HEI creates an individualistic environment where people do not share information with others for fear that they will be promoted before them. *'The competitive individualism that the system tries to encourage goes against the old notion of a community of scholars'* (A2.1).

QAA and quality of feeling

While respondents felt that there is a need to monitor the quality of teaching, they thought that the QAA is not appropriate for this and results in far too much administration.

'I think it's rather akin to the schools inspection system and I think in the universities it's not really appropriate and a waste of time!' (A1.3).

One department does have its own system of student feedback to monitor the quality and performance of the staff's teaching. All information is fed back to the head of department who monitors it and feeds back in turn to the staff. The head also posts the information on the notice board, which enables the students to see that their voice is heard and encourages them to feed back information. It is not just critical information that is fed back but also praise. This was all set up at departmental level.

4. What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?

Most individuals had come straight in to higher education via a degree then a PhD. Only two interviewed had been in industry prior to entering academia, one of which was for three years in a research role.

All staff saw research output as a way to progress within their careers, although the emphasis seemed to be on quantity rather than quality since the RAE.

Development opportunities are available but much of the emphasis for career development is on the individual.

Departments do not really try to keep PhD students on board; they may offer a post doctorate but after that no system is in place to keep them.

Sideways development into other subject area was an option in some cases but not many individuals wanted to change subjects.

5. What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?

Appointment

Heads argued that there needs to be more freedom and autonomy for the heads of department when it comes to staff appointment and replacing staff that leave. *'In order to do what I would like to do I can't do that, I don't have the freedom to be able to do it'* (A1.1).

When it comes to appointing new members of staff, the heads make up the interview shortlists for the appointment panels. The panels are made up of people from across the university, which can inhibit who gets appointed if they do not agree with the head of department.

With regards to salary the head has a large amount of flexibility in the level: *'we can actually appoint right across the spectrum from the very bottom end to the very top end of the lecturing scale for anyone coming in'* (A1.1).

A number of measures are taken to try to ensure that the 'right people' are attracted. *'We try to make the position as attractive as possible in terms of putting resources into it from the department and try to create the right environment'* (A1.1). It is, however, felt that the university should put a larger amount of its resources into attracting higher quality candidates for appointment.

The HEI has spent a vast amount of money in creating research fellowships throughout the institution in order to attract the cream of the research crop, so to speak. This has proved beneficial, with many of the fellows being absorbed as lecturing staff after their six-year fellowship.

Retention

Heads indicated that if they had more freedom, flexibility and resources, they would be able to retain those who are currently leaving (the numbers of whom are quite low), as most leave for chairs and higher salaries.

Cost of living was an issue raised by younger newer members of staff who were trying to get their foot on the property ladder, and many older members of staff expressed concern about this.

All staff expressed discontent with the increased levels of administration that was required as part of the role, and the increase in bureaucracy and red tape that has crept into the system.

A mentoring system was in place but not used or set up to its full potential, with many people not quite understanding how the system works.

Promotion

Staff suggested that promotion criteria need to be widened. The emphasis needs to be on all aspects of teaching and not just driven by research outputs and RAE scores. The process should be made much more transparent and proper feedback should be given. An effective appraisal system could help to develop and progress staff further.

All policies

Some staff suggested that processes should be assessed for their ability to deliver equality of opportunity.

Key points

- Many of the staff were aware of the differences between academic salaries and those of industry.
- The HEI relies on its strong reputation to attract and retain staff, along with its abolition of the lecturer A scale which means that pay is often higher than in other universities.
- Distribution of staff is skewed more to the professorial level as there are no limits to the numbers of professorships, although there are of course budget constraints.
- Research is valued much more than teaching when it comes to promotion and progression.
- Heads of departments' hands are tied by the institution with regards to recruitment and appointment of new staff members.
- There is very limited use of hourly-paid part-time staff, with one department having just one hourly-paid staff member.
- Most important factors for staff were autonomy, variety and flexibility. However, many individuals flagged up the problems of increased administration and how these inhibited levels of autonomy and flexibility.
- Individual contributions to the RAE were very influential but the RAE was perceived to promote quantity rather than quality in research.

CASE STUDY B

Size: Medium
Type: Post-1992 university
Location: Small number of sites within medium-sized town

Mission:
Strong orientation towards excellent teaching where national reputation has been gained. Also seeking to raise research profile.

Staff development policies:
There is established system of induction and mentoring for new staff. The HEI provides its own Certificate in Higher Education for staff with less than five years' experience. There is a biennial appraisal system.

Academic departments:
Staff interviewed came from two schools. There is a high level of consistency in approach across the HEI except where noted. The main discipline in unit B1 is Architecture, and in B2, Mathematics and IT. Both achieved moderate scores in the last RAE and high scores in the QAA.

Sample interviewed:
Five senior staff: two deans, one long service research professor, one long service principal lecturer, one newly appointed principal lecturer.
Five junior staff: one long service lecturer, two newly appointed lecturers, two hourly-paid teachers.

ISSUES ARISING, RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion

Factors outwith institutions

The local environment has both positive and negative effects on retention and recruitment: the expensive local housing market and attractive area impact upon retention, but so does negative equity, leading to a feeling of being 'trapped'. This can mean that promotion is a bigger issue for some staff in order to maintain their standard of living. It is very difficult for new lecturers at the lower end of the salary scale to enter the housing market.

Department B1 is in an area where salaries in industry/private sector are approximately equal to academic salaries; B2 is in an area where it is possible to earn considerably more in industry. Student numbers generally in department B1 are falling, and new courses are being launched to reflect the changes within the discipline.

The demographic profile of those in discipline B1 is ageing nationally, leading to potential staff shortages in the relatively near future.

Factors within institutions

This is a post-1992 institution which is trying to raise standards and compete with a wide range of other HEIs in the same locality.

Restructuring and merging of departments, which is taking place on cost grounds, is causing anxiety especially where departments have to move to another campus. The institution is also moving to semesters. *'It's like having a new job without having to get a new job'* (B2.1).

RAE pressures are seen as onerous as there has not been a strong tradition of research in the past. Many staff feel poorly equipped in terms of research skills. However, those who have been carrying out research for some time report that resources in the form of teaching relief and other support are readily available.

The fact that teaching is not seen as valuable in terms of promotion is a major source of dissatisfaction.

Department B2, where it is possible to earn considerably more in industry, is severely understaffed, leading to additional teaching pressures on the remaining staff as well as increased administrative responsibilities.

Staff perspectives on working in this institution

There is concern about the perceived need to be competent in all aspects of teaching, research and administration, instead of developing more individual specialisations.

Main sources of job satisfaction are: autonomy and independence; control of work; teaching; working in a pleasant environment; supportive colleagues; contact with students, and seeing individuals achieve a degree. *'On the research side I haven't found any excitement'* (B2.1).

'I am definitely not here for the money because I couldn't survive on the money' (B1.1). *'I could be £5-10,000 better off if I were in industry and I would have a company car … probably private health insurance and things like that.'* (B2.3).

Main sources of job dissatisfaction include increased workloads, long working days and the 'loss' of the summer vacation for research/leave'*… like most people here I don't take my full leave entitlement' (B2.2).*

Differing opinions were expressed about whether teaching is valued within the departments/schools, but overall it is felt that teaching is not valued by the institution as a whole. Schools are under pressure to achieve good QAA scores but teaching is not valued otherwise.

2. How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?

Recruitment

Departments have devolved budgets which means that there is some leeway with salaries, but they have to be negotiated with the HR department in line with the job description.

The head of department talks to colleagues in other institutions to encourage them to apply but feels that the local housing market is a major factor in preventing people from applying. The poor quality of applicants is a concern.

Retention

The head of department in B2 tries to promote younger people in order to increase their salary and prevent them from leaving.

Good relationships within the departments are seen as a major factor in staff retention.

Promotion

Promotion is not possible on the basis of good teaching alone, only as a result of taking on additional administrative responsibilities or being a strong researcher, but there is not a strong research culture within the institution. *'All principal lecturers have to name some administrative responsibility; if you're not particularly interested in admin, there's no promotion'* (B1.3).

Promotion on the basis of taking on administrative responsibility is open to abuse in that staff agree to take on additional responsibility in order to achieve promotion but once it is awarded tend not to carry these duties out fully.

In department B1, three members of staff at principal lecturer (PL) level are approaching retirement within the coming academic year and are not being replaced at this level. A staff member who is also within five years of retirement will transfer to another department within the same institution (where there are vacant PL positions) if a PL in B1 is not awarded. The justification is to boost final salary for pension purposes.

3. What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?

ILT membership is not seen as a positive step. *'A lot of people are going to make careers out of being ILT-type people and the rest of us are going to have to carry on doing the teaching'* (B2.2).

The bureaucracy of the institution centre is seen as diverting resources away from teaching.

The promotion system is seen by staff as being open and consistent

Temporary promotions on the basis of some administrative responsibility are becoming more common: they are seen as a means of earning extra money albeit for the short term.

The position of head of department is not seen as desirable: *'Nowadays it's a mug's game – it's badly paid, the responsibility is horrendous and the amount of work is enormous'* (B1.2).

The QAA, the Transparency Review and the RAE are seen as valid, but only as individual initiatives; it is the combination that is seen as unreasonable in terms of workload.

Part-time staff are viewed as mixed blessings. On the one hand they carry out class teaching but on the other they require organising, managing and do not take up any administrative roles. Turnover among them tends to be high, creating additional costs of induction and training.

Student assessments of teaching are flawed as students can be 'manipulated' into providing favourable feedback.

There is a mixed response to mentoring schemes with much of the success being dependent upon the individual personal relationship between mentor and mentee.

4. What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?

The part-time teaching route can lead to full-time employment.

As mentioned earlier, ILT membership is not viewed in a positive light. Promotion tends to be on the basis of additional administrative responsibility. However, those who have achieved this tend not to fulfil the roles that they are supposed to, as they report not having the time to carry them out fully.

The contract research system is seen as extremely negative in terms of developing an academic career as well as being a very insecure career in itself.

Promotion from lecturer to senior lecturer is automatic (this is a post-1992 institution).

Promotion in department B1 has been on a personal basis for a considerable length of time, with no promotions in one particular unit for 20 years.

A PhD is now seen as a necessary qualification to obtaining a first lecturing post or for progression.

Consultancy is necessary as a means of financial survival but it detracts from the true academic role and thus hinders progression. However, for the disciplines of both departments it is considered necessary in order to keep in touch and up to date with what is happening in the subject area.

There is the possibility of a sideways career move into teaching research and teaching practice which is not tied to a particular department but is run by the institution centre.

5. What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?

Deans suggested that greater discretion is required for departments in setting salaries and benefits.

Staff noted that, apart from introductory training for new members of staff, there is very little in the way of staff development. ILT membership has to be paid by the individual.

New members of staff must do a teaching qualification.

There was strong support for a sabbatical in order to return to the 'real world', to carry out consultancy, and to keep in touch with recent developments.

Staff were critical that when higher-level staff leave they are replaced with staff at much lower levels on cost grounds. However, there is no promotion to maintain proportions across all grades.

Key points

- Local housing market influences recruitment and retention (attractive area but high cost of living).
- Some difficulties in recruiting but little concern about retention.
- Uncertainty created by ongoing programme of restructuring and rationalisation – felt by staff to create both insecurity and poorer prospects for promotion.
- Perception among staff that teaching is undervalued and unrecognised.
- Criteria for promotion based on level of responsibility, and size of administrative tasks rather than merit or expertise. However, have to be an all-rounder in order to cover the

lecturing role. Strong researchers can also be promoted but this is rare as the culture is not supportive of research.

- Heavy use of hourly-paid staff - problems in retention in this group.
- Some staff are keen to maintain links with external world, eg industry and professional practice/consultancy. However, opportunities are limited by onerous workloads.

Policy recommendations applicable to whole sector

Sabbaticals in order to refresh industry or professional experience.

CASE STUDY C

Size: Medium
Type: Pre-1992 university with elite research reputation
Location: Single site in inner city

Mission:
'To be world class'. This HEI has a very high reputation for research and recruits top quality students in an international context.

Staff development policies:
Training courses for part-time staff. Appraisal system (triennial). Mentoring – for new lecturing staff, but comments that application is patchy. Career development is a matter for individual responsibility.

Academic departments:
Staff interviewed came from two departments. There is a high level of consistency in approach across the HEI except where noted. Both departments were in the disciplinary area of Social Studies. Unit C1 achieved high scores in the last RAE and QAA, unit C2 achieved a high score in the RAE and a moderate score in the QAA.

Sample interviewed:
Five senior staff: two heads of department, one newly appointed professor, one long-service reader, one newly appointed senior lecturer.
Five junior staff: one long service lecturer, two newly appointed lecturers, two hourly-paid teachers (both postgraduate students).

ISSUES ARISING, RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion

Factors outwith institution

Both departments were recruiting in international labour markets and demanded candidates of outstanding quality based on a narrow range of criteria concerning research reputation and pedigree (thus previous experience was acceptable only from a very narrow range of HEIs). For one discipline there was a great scarcity of such candidates due to the competition offered by lucrative posts in the private sector. For the other area the difficulty was not so acute as the competition was confined to that with rival HEIs.

Recruits often had a previous connection with the HEI (eg first or second degree). A good source of candidates was Europeans (including from the UK) who wanted to return after studying/working in America.

Location in the inner city is attractive to some candidates but presents substantial difficulties in securing accommodation, securing quality education for children, and commuting to work – thus is 'double-edged'.

The HEI found it very difficult to recruit good administrative staff (due to labour market competition). This weakened the support infrastructure and led to academic staff carrying a greater administrative burden.

There was a major difficulty in retaining staff after the first four or five years. Some wish to return to their own or their partner's country of origin. Pension and health benefits are

considered comparatively poor, and affordability issues became sharper for those with children.

The level of remuneration is affected by the outside market. *'It's certainly one of the factors that remuneration of professors is influenced by outside offers'* (C1.1).

Factors within institution

The HEI has a strong reputation that attracts staff from a wide range of countries.

The reputation of the HEI attracted students of a very high quality – staff commented that this facilitated their teaching roles and made teaching more enjoyable. This also created the opportunity to run summer schools, which generated considerable income to reward staff who participated in these schools.

Research criteria were paramount in all selection decisions. Academic staff were recruited on the basis that they had the potential to become professors.

There was a great reluctance by the HEI to utilise the internal labour market, eg from the stock of their own postgraduates and researchers. A strong contributory factor in this was the importance of a strong publishing record in the selection criteria, something which could only be gained with several years post-qualification (PhD) experience. However, many staff seemed to return to this HEI at a later point in their careers, emphasising the importance of the network.

Occupying a single site is advantageous for keeping the staff community close-knit but has created challenges in providing good facilities. Thus although recent investment had produced some excellent new facilities some staff resented their own '*shoddy facilities*'.

Turnover among junior staff was greatly exacerbated by two factors. The 'major review' which took place at the end of the probationary period presented '*a major hurdle*', and some staff preferred to take up alternative posts elsewhere rather than undergo this. Indeed the longer than average probationary period before the offer of an established post was a disincentive to recruitment. The other factor was the impersonal culture.

The style and approach of academic managers was important. In one department the style was supportive and the incumbent head took the job seriously and sought to operate a democratic approach. In the other, senior staff sought to avoid the role of head at all costs which had led to major problems.

Virtually all power and decision making authority rested with the professoriate in the HEI. There was a sense that they selected staff to their agenda and in their own image. This group were virtually all white and male, and the HEI had a poor reputation for equal opportunities.

Staff perspective on working at this HEI

There were three interconnected reasons why staff had chosen to become and remain academics. These were:

- Autonomy: *'You were your own master from day one in a way that you wouldn't get in any other job'* (C1.1). There had been some erosion of this but it was still considerable from a comparative perspective. This was particularly noted by those who had taken up temporary secondments or had previously worked in other sectors.

- Variety: The ability to choose one's own research topics and approach was supported by variety in teaching too. '*You have amazing flexibility in terms of what you teach and how you teach it*' (C2.4).

- Flexibility: Staff were permitted to come into the premises when and how often they wished. This mitigated against disadvantages of the location, eg by avoiding rush hours.

Most staff were very enthusiastic about their own discipline and the opportunity to pursue a vocational interest.

The positive aspects of the academic job were diminished by a number of factors. There had been work intensification, particularly for junior staff. Thus although all staff worked very hard, senior staff had more autonomy. Thus: *'I seem to work all the time and I enjoy what I do, almost all of it'* linked to *'I enjoy teaching because I don't get too much of it'*(C2.1). The main increase in workload had come in teaching and associated activity. *'Teaching is something that people take very seriously and they see it as worthwhile and rewarding in its own right, but there is too much of it ...because there are too many students.'* (C1.1). It was the most recently recruited staff at lecturing level who, aided by hourly-paid staff, undertook all the undergraduate teaching, where the numbers had increased.

Despite the dominance of research in this HEI, especially in criteria for recognition of contribution and career advancement, staff did seem to value teaching. The increase in class size made lecturing more difficult and unsatisfying for students and staff.

Staff complained vociferously about the degree of bureaucratic control over teaching administration. They felt there was too much *'huff and puff'* (C1.2) about exams, and it was very difficult to introduce new courses and modules.

Younger staff noted a major generational gap between themselves and older, more senior staff. They felt they had no time to 'sit and think' and were on a 'different wavelength' from the professoriate. This reason, allied to strongly individualistic behaviour, created a culture which was both impersonal and soulless.

Pay was not perceived as of direct importance in its own right but purchasing power was. *'I find the salaries appropriate; what I find impossible is the housing costs are crazy'*(C1.3). , Some staff were less affected by this concern with accommodation costs: those with high-earning partners, other sources of income or who had lived in London for a long time.

Hourly-paid staff

The use of hourly-paid staff was so widespread that this merits a sharper focus. *'More recently ...particularly with younger members of staff, they seem to be more keen to farm out their teaching'* (C2.5). Virtually all undergraduate seminars and many lectures were undertaken by hourly-paid staff or temporary lecturers. This group is drawn from PhD students, both full and part-time.

There was a range of contractual types and *'all sorts of funny statuses'* (C2.3). Recently there had been a change in title from 'part-time' to 'occasional', with the comment that that was to avoid the part-time regulations legislation.

There seemed to be an expectation that all PhD students should teach. New PhD students did not seem to object, but some more experienced students of this group felt exploited. *'Part-time teachers do an awful lot of work, a lot of which simply isn't remunerated'* (C2.5). This role was not very lucrative for students, *'as a source of income you couldn't rely on part-time teaching here'* (C2.5).

These teachers felt isolated from lecturing colleagues and excluded from departmental meetings, *'the part-time teachers don't have contact with the department as a whole'* (C2.5). Some lecturing staff offered more support but this was the exception rather than the rule.

Some completing postgraduates were offered temporary lectureships (one-year contracts) which were salaried positions. However, a recent move had been to limit these to 50% pro rata. This was a deliberate anti-retention policy.

2. *How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?*

Recruitment

The HEI utilises fairly standard practices in recruitment, although the Appointments Board is made up of the professoriate, and personnel professionals have a fairly minor role in selection decisions. As yet, there is no obligation for members of panels to have equal opportunities training. The attraction of the HEI's reputation ensured high quality fields. But one department found great difficulty in filling vacancies despite this. This department also used international conferences to locate strong candidates from abroad and conduct a preliminary interview there. In the most recent round of junior appointments, it had to make some 15 offers before they got two acceptances. At a senior level of appointment this department found it much easier to use a 'poaching' approach. Thus two professors had recently been head-hunted via the informal network.

The HEI had a policy of permitting a market supplement of 30% on top of salary. Even so the department with the scarcity due to competition from other sectors still found it hard to recruit. It could offer the top of the scale plus the supplement but then found it was under pressure from that individual to be promoted at a very early stage. The department also sought to offer a better overall package by promising access to other income sources (eg beyond contract teaching) and reliefs from teaching and administration. The other department was under less competitive pressure and did not offer such incentives. For professorial appointments there was more flexibility as salaries were individually negotiable.

Retention

Retention difficulties with junior, unpromoted staff were widespread throughout the HEI. Around a third of staff left within the first four years. The response to the perception that the probation period was too long and too onerous had been to reduce the period from five to four years: *'People had left because they could not face what they had to go through'* (C2.3). There appeared to be no attempt to address the other major reasons for turnover such as poor management, a less than supportive culture, insufficient salary level and bureaucracy. Although some staff complained of being overburdened, the maximum amount of teaching in terms of contact hours was supposed to be 120 hours per year, which is low compared with other HEIs.

There was a sense from the centre that was not echoed at departmental level, that the supply of new recruits was plentiful. Promotion is used as a retention policy. Those who are offered a post elsewhere are likely to receive a counter offer of promotion from the HEI.

Retention is much less of an issue for staff with longer service. Indeed even staff who have been bypassed for promotion seem very reluctant to leave. Comments such as, *'it's a pretty good deal here'* (C1.4), and *'there are a lot worse places to be, I'm sure'* (C2.3) exemplified the belief that being a lecturer here was as good as more senior posts elsewhere.

Promotion

All staff below the level of professor are appointed on the probationary scheme. In rare cases the major review at the end of this could be accelerated. Evidence about the quality of teaching is presented at this major review but only has a very minor influence on the decision to offer a permanent appointment.

Promotion is almost impossible without the support of departmental professors. For unsuccessful candidates it is a *'gruelling experience'* (C2.3). The key criterion is research excellence. Recently introduced is an 'out of phase' scheme to respond to staff receiving job offers from elsewhere.

The review and promotion system is perceived as opaque: *'There really isn't any kind of transparency and of course, therefore there isn't much faith in the system because people don't know how these decisions are made'* (C2.4).

One reason staff are uninformed about such procedures is that the staff handbook is now exclusively on the intranet, and *'hard to locate'* (C2.3).

3. What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?

As research is so dominant in this HEI, a lot of emphasis has been put on the RAE, *'well, the RAE provides the major performance management'* (C2.1). Although institutional management did not seem *'to have been too vicious'* (C2.3) in responding to the RAE, with only a few staff reclassified as senior teaching fellows and taken off the main academic scale, there were some consequences:

- On policy: *'This department is an archetypal example of what you do if you go for RAE – you recruit me instead of recruiting a young blood and it's not healthy'* (C2.4). [In order to improve our grade] *'luminaries have been appointed...who attend two days a year...bypassed appointment procedures....head of department never even consulted about who to be appointed'* (C2.3).

- On research dissemination: *'My book counts the case as a bloody article...this is just dumb!'* (C2.4); *'quantity not quality'* (C1.2).

However, the RAE was seen to lead to rewarding outcomes whereas the QAA did not. *'Relatively less work in RAE [than QAA] and it is something we should be doing any way; [teaching quality visits] are particularly onerous'* (C1.2).

A formal system of student evaluation has been present in the HEI for some time. Awards were given to staff who got the best results but they are not very prestigious. Hourly-paid staff got good evaluations, by and large. Most senior staff paid little attention to evaluation and it had negligible impact on progression. Heads might respond to a very poor evaluation. To ease administrative burdens, forms were now completed online and the response rate among students was much less.

Innovation or research into teaching were not valued. Accreditation of teaching and the ILT were considered to be irrelevant to this HEI.

The personal tutor system had now virtually withered away. Junior staff saw pastoral care as a burden that they had insufficient time and training to deal with.

4. What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?

Few staff seemed to take a planned route; opportunity and serendipity played a greater role.

The only way to receive tangible recognition of contribution at this HEI was to produce research outputs. The best way to do this was to focus on a specialist research area and maximise reputation. Staff *'found it difficult to break away from this'* (C2.3) and those who sought to explore new areas found it be a *'career mistake'* (C2.3).

The definition of valuable research was narrowly defined to academic outputs. There was little interface between university and practitioners, *'it's really kind of frowned upon'*(C2.4).

Development and career management were considered the responsibility of the individual. This was accepted by management and most staff; *'the difficulty here is that academics just don't seem to care about anybody else other than themselves'* (C2.4). Appraisal was occasional and not found to be very useful by junior staff. The mentoring system was also only seen to be beneficial on the rare occasion where the relationship was good. Senior staff did not seem to understand the needs of junior staff. Junior staff resented the fact that senior staff emphasised research then allocated most of the teaching and administration to them.

Research stars were fast-tracked for promotion. Successful applications for external posts gained powerful leverage. Others had the choice of leaving or maintaining a junior faculty position with associated benefits and disadvantages.

5. What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?

Informants focussed on how the institutions might improve practice.

Appointment

Some staff commented that there was an overly narrow set of criteria for selection. This seems to be predicated by the assumption that only staff with qualifications and/or experience from a very select set of HEIs possess the necessary attributes to work at this HEI. They suggested that needs to be broadened.

Enhanced salaries are available, and there is considerable flexibility in reward. In the view of junior staff, the extended 'trial' period in operation may offer a source of labour to take the greatest teaching loads and act as a 'buffer' for the professoriate. But for the junior staff this leads to insecurity, job dissatisfaction and resentment and may cause them to leave before the trial period is concluded.

Retention

There was a strong belief that the specific problem of the costs of living in London needs to be addressed. This could involve the provision of subsidies for accommodation in some form (a very popular suggestion for recently appointed staff).

Staff would value a more inclusive approach to departmental management, a more collegial culture and fewer bureaucratic hurdles.

One head of department commented that there needs to be explicit recognition that a blend of staff are required, not just 'research stars'. Even a recently appointed research star said that such staff are a poor role model to junior staff and students. The head suggested that tangible recognition is required for those who contribute to activities other than RAE-based research.

Junior staff argued that development policies and the culture need to be overhauled so that those with responsibility actually deliver. A 360-degree approach to appraisal was suggested.

Promotion

There were comments that the criteria that are currently applied need to be widened. The process should be made much more transparent and proper feedback should be given. Those that had been successful in promotions remained silent on these issues.

All policies

Junior staff proposed that processes should be assessed in their ability to deliver equality of opportunity. The experienced part-time tutor was very critical of arrangements and practices covering part-time teaching, and suggested that the whole issue of part-time teaching staff needs to be addressed urgently.

Key points

- Location in the inner city sharpened reward issues.
- HEI relies on elite reputation to attract and retain staff.
- Research dominates all selection decisions.
- Retention problems for new and junior staff.
- Heavy use of hourly-paid teachers (postgraduates).
- Only recruiting stars entails not meeting everyone's aspirations and creates a poor blend of staff to address all the roles.
- Most important factors for staff were autonomy, variety and flexibility. This HEI delivered that quite well.

CASE STUDY D

Size: Large
Type: Post-1992 university, 'a university of applied learning'
Location: Urban

Mission:
Stresses teaching and research of value to society; equal opportunities; the employment, enrolment and empowerment of staff and students from the whole community.

Staff development policies:
A staff development manager works with departments to support development and to provide appropriate in-house training. Attendance at conferences is encouraged and supported; registration for higher degrees is encouraged and supported. Several departments have become 'Investors in People'. There is an appraisal system which serves to identify further personal training needs. Part-time members of staff can 'choose' whether to present themselves for appraisal. Part-timers are given a continuing professional development (CPD) interview when they first take up a contract.

Academic departments:
Staff were interviewed from D1 a diversified technology department, and D2 a modern language centre outside the faculty structure, reporting directly to a member of the executive. D1 achieved a moderate RAE score and some members of staff have received in-house recognition for the high quality of their teaching. D2 is trying to develop a research base and has yet to be assessed for teaching quality.

Sample interviewed:
Six senior staff: two heads of department, one reader, three principal lecturers.
Two junior staff: one lecturer, one hourly-paid part-timer.

ISSUES ARISING, RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. *Issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion*

Factors outwith the institution
The HEI serves a post-industrial, multi-cultural, regenerated city. Property prices are medium range. There is easy access to surrounding countryside.

There is a very small pool of suitably trained and experienced applicants for posts teaching innovative technology courses in the diversified unit D1. Additionally, there are many employment opportunities available to these applicants. D2 finds it difficult to identify part-time lecturers in some lesser taught languages.

Factors within the institution
A no-redundancy clause, negotiated with the academic staff union, has affected the ability of both departments to make appointments. The diversified D1 has carried staff for whom it can no longer provide a full timetable for the past six years. These staff are not willing to undertake retraining, although it is available to them.

Despite the explicit equal opportunities policy within the mission statement, and large local ethnic minority populations, both heads of department claimed difficulties in making

appointments from the whole community. In neither department had any of the academic or support staff declared disabilities.

Internal communication is of a high standard. There are several internal news magazines and yearly faculty reports. Statistical information is regularly produced.

2. ***How does the HEI encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?***

Recruitment

Staff vacancies are posted on the web. Telephone and televisual links are used to interview overseas candidates.

With relation to salaries, there is limited flexibility in making new appointments.

D1 is able to employ lecturers, who have employment experience outside HE, at salaries above starting points on the scale. However, the department is not able to join the research transfer market: promises cannot be made to attract identified external candidates.

D2 has *'complete control over the budget we get. If we haven't got enough money, we need to generate more income.'* Because of the high proportion of hourly-paid lecturers and the number taking on *'more teaching contact than if they were in a full-time job'* (550 hours), staffing costs are high. The appointment of additional full time lecturers has waited on the development of courses intended to attract full-time students.

D2 has criteria to determine which applicants should be placed on its part-time staff register. These hourly-paid lecturers are largely invisible within the HEI.

Retention

Working conditions are generally good. Some, even senior, staff share tutorial accommodation, but these rooms are not crowded and they are well equipped. The campuses are pleasant. Dining facilities and coffee outlets are shared with students; there is a wide choice. Administrative staff support is adequate.

Full-time staff have a contract which defines the balance between expected teaching, research and other tasks. The hours allotted for research are roughly a quarter of those for teaching; they are most commonly taken as a block.

'There is no difficulty in retaining staff, rather the reverse. Higher education might be improved if there was more mobility' (D2).

There is a reported high level of dissatisfaction amongst the casual part-timers, who remain unsure of their hours from term to term. They face insecurity about their level of income, which may fluctuate even within one year. There is a perception that fractional contracts are only given *'if your face fits'*. Nevertheless, the part-time staff, the majority of whom are women, vary very little.

Promotion

The HEI has planned an academic work force where 35% are at principal lecturer level. Aiming for this staffing profile, it has an annual round of promotions. The heads of departments D1 and D2 both commented on how the prospect of promotions motivated staff. The criteria for promotion are distributed to all academic staff each year.

In the academic year 2000-2001, promotions to principal lecturer were targeted to recognise excellence in learning, teaching and assessment.

The generic job description for principal lecturer emphasises flexibility. Where departmental heads see flexibility as their most urgent need for the future, as in D2, they may not sufficiently refine the job description. This has left one recently promoted PL unsure of his particular strengths and future role within the department.

Promotion to professor is also offered annually. The criteria for such an award are circulated to eligible staff, and list excellence in management, entrepreneurial activity and research. In practice, the committee considering applications is perceived as biased towards research.

3. *What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within the HEI and the progression of their academic staff?*

External funding intended to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is having a positive effect. Promotions have been linked directly to teaching and learning, and internal recognition and prizes awarded to excellent teachers.

D2 is leading in the national development of a system of tandem observation to refine teaching skills, and is developing benchmarks for language teaching.

To an extent, the RAE is driving staff development in both departments, but this development does not involve all staff.

The head of D1 would like to appoint a reader, but regards this as impossible if he is unable to make 'promises' to external candidates.

In defining nine new appointments, projected to be made over the next three years, the head of D2 sees research capability as a priority.

Part-time staff tend to view progression as an appointment to a full-time post.

In D2, the manager of part-time staff sees a narrow line between involving staff and exploiting them. *'Part-timers must not believe that participation outside the classroom will lead to a full-time or fractional contract.'*

4. *What are the routes for academic staff to develop their careers?*

Career development is seen as possible within the HEI. Promotion to professor is linked to research activity. Promotion to principal lecturer most usually depends on managerial activity, but in 2001 was linked to teaching.

The diversification of course provision, particularly where this is achieved through collaboration with other institutions, provides opportunities for staff development.

Personal appraisal interviews were seen as an opportunity to review career achievements and plan career development. The success of the appraisal process depends on the competence of the interviewer.
Access to quality staff development and appraisal may be of increased importance to staff without tenure. Hourly-paid staff receive no allowances (time, pay) for these activities.

5. ***What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?***

Senior departmental staff are involved in appointments. Criteria for appointments are negotiated internally and circulated to all candidates. Faculties have an overview of staffing.

The staff unions are fully recognised and involved in negotiations to safeguard the interests of staff.

CPD appears to be a reality for those members of full-time staff who choose to take advantage of in-house opportunities.

Promotion processes are open and transparent.

Key points

- The university is achieving its objective: to enrol and empower students from the whole community. It is not employing academic staff from the whole community.
- Teaching is valued and (in 2000-2001) can lead to promotion.
- Both departments surveyed were engaged in the diversification of provision.
- Staff recruitment and retention is only a problem in rapidly developing areas (creative technology).
- Hourly-paid staff face uncertainty about fluctuations in hours, and levels of earning, and receive no remuneration for staff development
- The HEI is trying to develop a research base but development is hampered by no-redundancy clause.

CASE STUDY E

Size: Large
Type: Pre-1992 university
Location: Urban

Mission:
Emphasises its role in the development of higher education; a research strength in both core disciplines and rarer subjects; claims that its teaching is supported by the latest technologies and a strong research base; offers a wide choice of interdisciplinary degrees.

Staff development policies:
All staff are required to take part in continuing professional development (CPD). Two main units support staff development: the Staff and Departmental Development Unit and the Flexible Learning Development Unit. Attendance at conferences is expected and supported, and research sabbaticals are available. There is an appraisal system, and membership of ILT is supported and encouraged. However, access to in-house staff development is not open to the hourly-paid, those on fixed-term contracts, and those jointly appointed to the NHS teaching hospital.

Academic departments:
Staff were interviewed from two departments. E1 is located within the Faculty of Arts and achieved a high RAE score. Newly appointed junior staff are required to complete the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education and are given a time allowance to facilitate this, otherwise the improvement of teaching is not a priority. Mostteaching is undertaken by junior staff and postgraduate students. E2 is in a school of medicine and has yet to develop a research base; it has prioritised research development and the improvement of a poor teaching QAA score.

Sample interviewed:
Six senior staff: four professors, including a departmental chair and a director of unit; two senior lecturers .
Four junior staff: two lecturers; a researcher; and a PhD student who was an hourly-paid lecturer.

ISSUES ARISING, RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion

Factors outwith institutionsThe HEI is at the centre of a thriving, culturally diverse city. The decline in industry has been offset by growth in the service sector. There is easy access to neighbouring semi-rural towns and countryside. A wide range of property is available.

Thus far, department E1 has not experienced difficulty attracting suitable applicants for posts. If anything there appears to be an overproduction of postgraduates capable of contributing to the work of E1.

There is a small pool of medical education specialists, not all of them doctors.

Factors within the institution

Both departments are facing pressures from the institution to balance their budget.

The results of a merger with a smaller department and entry into the research transfer market have left E1 top heavy and financially non-viable. E2 has been in deficit for many years but is now struggling to remove this debt.

There is no explicit commitment to equality of opportunity within the HEI mission statement. E1 is dominated by white males. There are only two (6%) women in the department. *'Female and, to an even greater extent, ethnic minority applicants are rare'* (E1). The perpetuation of a culture is evident in the university education of staff: 41% from Oxford, 28% from London and 12% from Cambridge; 81% of the staff from three HEIs.

Within E2 the pattern of staffing is so different (80% women) as to suggest that medical education may be coming to be seen as a woman's job.

In neither department had any of the academic or support staff declared disabilities.

Staffing is largely devolved to departments. This appears to foster a continuity of culture, with appointments being made of candidates who conform to a departmental image. The identification of known candidates for key posts, prior to interview, appears to be common in both departments.

In E1, the criteria for appointment to a junior post now include a publication record. This has driven up the age of first appointees.

Within E1, the three-year rotation of departmental chair has not led to cohesive departmental development. The present holder of the chair has completed the Northern Universities HE management course and regularly attends in-house updating courses. The next chair of the department may not have any management qualification.

Internal communication is of variable quality.

2. *How does the HEI encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?*

Recruitment

Staff vacancies are posted on the web.

The HEI devolves responsibility for budget and staffing to departmental level. Chairs of departments are heads of resource centres, budget managers, and have authority under the central powers of the university for staffing.

With relation to salaries, considerable flexibility is reported in making senior appointments.

In E1, the professors may all be paid at differing rates. Three, if not four, of the appointees were recruited to aid departmental development by strengthening the research base. They were identified, invited to apply for a particular post and, after a move had been agreed, they were able to negotiate the terms of that move directly with the pro vice-chancellor for staffing.

E2 has seen the need to increase the level of appointment of the director of the medical education unit in order to attract candidates of sufficient calibre.

At the same time that E1 was actively seeking to appoint known researchers to personal chairs, rolling fixed-term contracts were used for junior appointments to avoid long-term financial commitment. One junior member of staff in E1 had accepted three consecutive fixed contracts on the repeated promise of permanent employment.

Retention

Working conditions vary from building to building. E1 academic staff enjoy individual tutorial rooms in two connected buildings. They are well equipped and of a reasonable size. E2 staff are mostly accommodated in a 1960s block, several sharing crowded rooms with no natural light. There is still a separate staff building housing the senior common rooms. The campus is within easy reach of the city centre. Administrative staff support is adequate.

In the past, staffing has been stable, with only the natural progression of people leaving or retiring and the making of new appointments. Senior staff have been able to avoid teaching to concentrate on research, leading to departmental lack of interest in students, and teaching as an undervalued activity.

In E1, the situation has been changed, not through any change of heart. Research remains the perquisite of senior staff; students are still an interruption. RAE transfers and a merger with a smaller department have resulted in financial difficulties, making early retirements and restructuring (redundancies) imperative.

In the institution, medical education was marginalised. Change has come about mainly because of the publication of government policies in 'Tomorrow's Doctors' and a poor teaching quality assessment.

E2 was created to give a steer to the development of education courses and the supervision of students. The department has also accepted that the attitudes of medical staff generally must change. The money which follows students is supporting research, therefore *'teaching has to be valued'*. It may be that a teaching transfer market is opening as medical education becomes more valued. There is movement between HEIs. The first head of E2 was not a doctor and was appointed as senior lecturer. The present head, a doctor, is professor and honorary consultant. E2 wishes to enter the RAE, and is developing pedagogical research. The department is in the grips of change and is an exciting place to work. The professor would like to see *'a continuing planned movement of staff rather than an inertia resulting from staff stagnation'*.

In E1, another apparent side-effect of the RAE has been the lowering of the age at which senior lectureships are made.

Dissatisfaction is found amongst junior and hourly-paid staff. Junior staff see their chances of promotion blocked as their teaching workload increases and the time available for research diminishes. One lecturer had been excluded from the RAE because of the slow progress of his research; he felt that this has blighted his career prospects. Hourly-paid lecturers see little chance of a permanent appointment. Freedom from family ties and a willingness to be mobile are crucial. Despite this, there is no apparent movement outside academia.

Promotion

One of the major changes, at this and other universities, during the past nine or ten years has been the establishment and expansion of the gift of the personal chair. There has also been a degree of recruiting at top level in order to strengthen departments for the RAE.

The introduction of research quality assessment revealed and promoted 'a thriving research transfer market'. Senior lecturers and professors are tempted to move institutions by the offer

of a personal chair – moving to a higher status university, or one perceived to have greater financial stability, or where the level of student applications is consistently high, or the subject library extensive. Once a move has been agreed, the pro vice-chancellor for staffing would conduct the negotiation of a salary.

The introduction of personal chairs has speeded up the process of internal promotion, with senior lectureships being awarded to younger candidates. However, junior appointments are shifting to an older age range as, increasingly, a publication record is expected.

The criteria for promotion to senior lecturer are circulated to members of staff each year. They are described as: excellence in two out of three of teaching, research and administration. Promotions are considered by a central committee. The process is not transparent. In application the criteria appear to have different weightings, favouring research. Measures intended to increase the recognition of good teaching will be in place during 2001-2002.

3. *What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within the HEI and the progression of their academic staff?*

The HEI sees the value of ILT. All academic staff are encouraged to take up membership and presently, ILT fees are paid by the institution.

A poor QAA score is driving curriculum, departmental and staff development in E2.

The effects of the RAE on the research transfer market are detailed above. These effects have mainly benefited senior staff, although it is suggested that promotion to senior lecturer is now at an earlier age. Two members of E1 staff, a professor and a lecturer, claimed that the RAE has resulted in shallower and less wide-ranging research; both claimed the pressure was to publish more often rather than to produce quality research.

The RAE may foster significant development of research and researchers in medical pedagogy. There is anxiety that the research will not be adjudged, by the RAE, on the same basis as medical research.

4. *What are the routes for academic staff to develop their careers?*

There is evidence, from both departments, that academics are deliberately changing their research interests to areas in which there is perceived to be a shortage of activity: increasing their publication prospects and accelerating their continuing career development.

Postgraduates wishing to enter academia see the need to be mobile as paramount.

5. *What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?*

The heads of both departments mentioned the excellence of the Staff and Departmental Development Unit (SDDU) which provides in-house training for a large academic, administrative and technical staff, '*from porters to professors*'. Information about courses is posted on the web. Courses span teaching, research, management and leadership, personal and departmental development. In addition to a full-time staff of 15, SDDU 'buys in' trainers and lecturers from other institutions. Books, periodicals, research papers, computer-based learning materials and other audiovisual materials are available to staff on loan. SDDU offers

both a postgraduate certificate in learning and teaching in higher education, recognised by ILT, and a postgraduate diploma, but does not provide courses in IT.

The Flexible Learning Development Unit (FLDU) has been established to fill a perceived gap. The FLDU has drawn academic staff on secondment from across the institution. It helps colleagues who are introducing technology-supported teaching and learning.

Key points

- The university protects an elitist status. Research is still the only route to promotion in the older departments
- Changes of attitude to increase the value of teaching and respect for students are slow to take effect
- Although promotion criteria are published and circulated, research is believed to have a higher weighting than teaching and administration
- The institution invests in staff and departmental development
- Responses to a poor QAA score are driving curriculum development in E2
- Medical education may be an area in which a shortage of well-qualified staff is revealed.

CASE STUDY F

Size: Medium
Type: 20th century teacher education foundation, diversified and merged
Location: Small town with several outlying sites, one 400 miles away

Mission:
Stress on teaching, valuing diversity and meeting local educational needs, which is echoed in staff interviews. Teaching, rather than research, is the traditional priority here.

Staff development policies:
Appraisal system in place but patchily implemented for all full-time and some part-time staff. Internal staff development programme; some funding for external development opportunities. Also some evidence of difficulty in managing a developmental culture across multiple sites.

Academic departments:
Staff interviewed came from two departments in different faculties. The first was a fast-growing multidisciplinary department which had achieved a high QAA score, but was not making a departmental RAE submission. The second, concerned with teacher education, has nearly a quarter of staff on hourly-based or proportional contracts. It did not make a departmental RAE submission.

Sample interviewed:
Five senior staff: one dean; 2 heads of department; one research professor; one principal lecturer.
Six junior staff: two senior lecturers (one permanent, the other on temporary secondment); one lecturer; one research associate; one research and teaching assistant; and one hourly-paid part-time visiting lecturer.

ISSUES ARISING, RELATED TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Issues that affect academic staff recruitment, retention and promotion

Factors outwith institutions

There are national shortages of suitable candidates, particularly in the multidisciplinary department subject area, which is expanding in many competitor institutions. Increased salaries for schoolteachers also make moving into HE less attractive. The attractive local environment aids recruitment and retention, and also attracts many retiring lecturers who are available to teach part-time. The availability of such willing part-timers who are not totally dependent on the pay to live may help to release established staff for research and other non-teaching activities, but has implications for the careers of aspiring full-time staff. Another environmental factor is the lack of ethnic diversity in the locality, which is reflected in staff and student applicants and populations.

Delays in getting funding for staff create problems for departments developing new courses. For expansion and innovation, development funding is needed in advance of the arrival of the students.

Factors within institutions

The geographical spread of this multi-site institution provides a '*challenge for communication*'. Although a few interviewees note benefits in having a variety of different subcultures and feel that growth has provided new opportunities, others dislike the travel and

would even resign if asked to teach on a distant campus. Moreover, the management information system is not equally efficient for all sites, so some academic staff can feel isolated, unsupported, and ignorant of potential staff development and promotion opportunities.

In one department, staff felt that a recent good QAA rating would help attract staff and students. RAE pressures affect only a small minority of staff here. Some expressed frustration about lack of time and opportunity for research, and queried the degree of commitment to developing research; while others remained sceptical of its value in an HEI which sees itself as primarily a teaching institution. Some research-active staff deplored the lack of experienced researchers amongst senior staff and said they might move in search of what one termed '*a proper research culture*'.

The HEI has seen considerable growth and change, and anxiety about restructuring emerged in several interviews. While structural changes may create promotion possibilities for some staff, clearly they also unsettle others and exacerbate communication problems, described by one interviewee as '*consultation without listening*'.

Reward systems issues

Declared sources of job satisfaction include: direct contact with students, working with supportive colleagues, an open 'apolitical' culture, relative autonomy for departments, for courses and for individual staff, and good or improving facilities. Satisfaction depends on staff knowing that they are appreciated by the 'institution' as well as by immediate colleagues.

Managers noted that some flexibility is possible in deciding the point on the scale for appointment of new staff. Appointment low on the scale is difficult, when staff with professional experience are required. Even so, financial reward may attract some back from HE into professional practice. Some frustration was expressed about lack of opportunities to motivate staff through temporary responsibility payments.

Teaching is the key activity here and research is a minority interest. Some staff, with research experience gained elsewhere, expressed regret about limited opportunities to do research. Even funding, without release from teaching and administrative duties, did not suffice because '*however, much you get paid, you only have 24 hours in a day*'. Readership procedures do exist for research-active staff, and a few readers have been appointed. Some staff noted that there is no equivalent for '*people who are ambitious in terms of their teaching*'. Suggestions include a readership equivalent for good teachers, and sabbatical opportunities for improving teaching, as well as research.

2. *How do HEIs encourage effective recruitment, retention and promotion of academic staff?*

Recruitment

Well-documented, thorough and transparent procedures are used for recruiting and interviewing full-time staff, but staff on secondment or temporary contracts may have less rigorous procedures. Part-timers are treated differently: they are generally recruited by departments, not through central personnel procedures, and may not be interviewed formally. Only the payroll section can know how many there are in all.

Recruiting highly paid teachers and nurses to HE is becoming harder. We found at least one example of a lecturer who had returned to work in schools because of the pay differential. In another instance, recruitment of a senior professional at a salary comparable with earnings in

practice resulted ultimately in substantial salary increases for HE colleagues in equivalent posts.

Retention

The pleasant campuses have a relatively low staff turnover. Facilities and adequate administrative support appear to affect how people see their workload. The general environment does facilitate recruitment on some campuses, and there is some evidence that it also aids retention. Some staff said they felt particularly comfortable with the ethos of the college or commented on the attractive facilities.

The quality of management at departmental level was seen as very important. In one department in particular, many interviewees stressed the positive value of the management style of the head of department in motivating them to stay and contribute to the department's growth.

In a predominantly teaching institution, it was acknowledged that opportunities for research may encourage retention. Having an organisational climate appropriate to the institution's priorities helps – but even staff in an institution prioritising teaching may have research aspirations too. Employment of research and teaching assistants has potential to stimulate research culture and free teaching staff to undertake research, while also allowing research and teaching assistants to launch their academic careers, but this may not be a quick or easy solution. Heads of department acknowledged a high profile researcher was probably also necessary.

There was some positive comment about the staff development programme, which may encourage retention; and mentoring schemes are established in some departments, even for part-timers, if they have substantial contact with students. Some part-timers may also have access to staff development. Difficulties in funding external staff development opportunities were, however, acknowledged at all levels.

Promotion

Despite the emphasis in the mission statement, promotion opportunities are not available purely on the basis of good teaching, although some senior and junior staff commented on the need for this. Generally, promotion links the member of staff to a particular administrative responsibility, and this can limit flexibility for the individual if they subsequently wish to relinquish this. There are promotion opportunities in taking on the extra roles and responsibilities resulting from expansion of the institution. Both managers and staff found the notion of rotation of responsibilities attractive – rather than permanent, personal promotion, staff would receive reward for temporary responsibility.

This institution has considerable variety of staff – researchers as well as teaching practitioners who have come to academic careers after work experience, and may return to practice. Promotion opportunities for those who wish to stay in research, rather than move into teaching, are limited. Those who had worked elsewhere were probably more aware of the differences in culture and research facilities. Moving from a teaching culture to a research culture is a complex enterprise and may be inhibited by the institution's lack of awareness of the different needs of researchers – working conditions, equipment, support for development, budgets. *'Changing culture is a long haul.'*

Career opportunities are limited where skills are being developed that seem unhelpful for other jobs – eg a track record in course development is not useful for academic promotion, but could be for administrative promotion.

3. *What are the relationships between maintaining and improving standards within HEIs and the progression of their academic staff?*

The impact of the QAA, particularly in terms of focus on learning outcomes and planning, was generally seen as positive. Nevertheless, in a recent QAA assessment, efforts had been made at departmental level to limit the disruptive impact on teaching, by ensuring that most of the preparation was handled by a small team. While a good QAA score is seen as useful, graduate employment statistics are also valued as confirmation of quality of teaching.

Research in this setting is seen as desirable, rather than essential: the RAE is not a driving force. Although hourly-paid staff and research and teaching assistants are used to release some full-time staff for research, there is no evidence here of detrimental impact on teaching quality.

4. *What are the routes available for academic staff to develop their careers?*

Promotion for teaching staff is achieved primarily through taking on administrative responsibility. Expansion and mergers have also helped some develop their careers, although others feel promotion prospects were damaged by the influx of new staff.

Alternative routes to career development are less well represented. Research and teaching assistants have opportunities to develop in either direction: these posts are designed as *'a good half-way house for them to find out whether they could teach'*. Some have already moved to lectureships, from which they may seek eventual promotion to reader. One interviewee perceived a lack of flexibility in coping with people with non-standard experience, who have not been in HE all their lives, commenting: *'If you have a good idea in your 20s, they give you the job; if you are in your 30s, they give somebody else the job; if you are in your 40s plus, they tend to sack you for it.'* Opportunities for career development for part-timers and hourly-paid staff are severely limited.

5. *What areas of best practice can be identified in relation to staff appointment, retention and promotion?*

Appointment

The system of interviewing, and involvement of departmental staff in short-listing, interviewing and commenting on candidate's presentations is thorough, although many temporary and part-time staff by-pass this system. Nevertheless, some part-time staff may access induction and development, and a mentoring scheme.

Retention

The value of good departmental management, listening to and involving staff in decisions, was mentioned by several as a factor in retention and motivation. The staff development programme and appraisal system attracted some positive comment, although there is a need to ensure equality of opportunity for staff on all campuses, and to have sufficient funds in place to allow needs to be met. Senior management support for ILT membership was expressed, although some staff showed less enthusiasm. Best practice is perhaps ensuring that all staff members have appropriate development opportunities: for some this may be developing their teaching; for others, opportunities to research. Some funds have been allocated to departments for sabbatical opportunities: it is too soon to evaluate, but good practice may emerge.

Promotion

As with appointment, good practice in promotion requires well-documented, transparent procedures. Expansion of the institution provides opportunities for sideways moves, but may also constrain career advancement, and reluctance to teach on other campuses may even lead

some staff to leave the institution. Opportunities to take on administrative responsibilities are plentiful, and as administration is the principal route to promotion in this institution, junior staff may take this on as a stepping-stone to promotion. Rapid expansion may have repercussions: managers need to cherish staff, reduce isolation, ensure that new staff members and those in new campuses and outlying organisations feel part of the institution.

6. *How can strategies be developed in higher education to support depth and breadth of career opportunities for academic staff across the sector?*

The most frequently cited need was to find ways of rewarding good teaching, rather than linking promotion to administrative roles. '*HEFCE could look at people who are ambitious in terms of their teaching*' – this might be a question of promoted posts, or a readership equivalent procedure for demonstrating excellence, which might be rewarded, but for a limited period. Other requests were for ways of using sabbatical time to develop or refresh teaching approaches, rather than undertaking research.

Any strategy must take account of the diversity of career aspirations of staff. In an institution without a strong research tradition, appointment of research staff needs to be followed through with support and development, if these people are to be retained and a genuine research culture developed.

Although treatment of part-time staff was acknowledged to have improved in recent years, there is still scope to improve their access to staff development and career development opportunities. With tight budgets delegated to heads of departments, they are under great pressure to use hourly-paid staff to free permanent staff for further course development or research, or to cover the gaps before funding becomes available to staff new courses. Perhaps there is a need for tighter control, at institutional or even central governmental level, to prevent abuse. An interviewee who has experience of such practice did not blame heads of department for succumbing to pressure, but declared, '*I think the whole system is set up in a way that is prejudicial to certain people's opportunities*'. Certainly the role of the head of department, who may be responsible both for balancing the books and for developing staff, is pivotal. Institutions may need to provide high quality staff development in both areas, and to consider checks and balances to ensure that both responsibilities receive appropriate attention.

7. *What might be the cost implications of such recommendations?*

Establishing a readership-equivalent scheme for excellent teachers would have associated costs, but some of this might be recouped by involving such 'readers' in developing colleagues' teaching. Unlike administrative promotion, this would not be permanent, although potentially renewable. Appointing research staff needs to be followed up by support, with both facilities and opportunities for professional development. If administrative promotion leads to acquisition of responsibilities for career development of junior colleagues, there will be cost implications for retraining promoted staff to meet these new responsibilities. There may also be a financial cost associated with legal liabilities if part-time workers are not treated equally and are doing equivalent work.

8. *Overview*

No substantial differences in approach between the two departments were discovered, although the positive impact of good departmental management emerged as a much stronger theme in the interviews in one department. Both departments have considerable input to the recruitment of full-time staff, and considerable autonomy in appointing to less secure positions. In both there was some tension between teaching and research, although the issues here were very different from those in traditional research-oriented universities. Both

departments demonstrated the difficulties of development in a multi-site organisation, as well as the positive impact of expansion.

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